

USING CATECHESIS TO FOSTER SPIRITUAL GROWTH IN PRE-TEENS

A THESIS-PROJECT

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF  
GORDON-CONWELL THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

BY

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MAY 2016



To my wife Nelia who is my biggest fan and to my children Olivia and Isaiah may my  
ceiling be your floor.

## CONTENTS

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS	vii
ABSTRACT	viii
1. THE PROBLEM AND ITS SETTING	1
Introduction	1
Shallow Faith	4
Doubtless Faith	9
Hemorrhaging Faith	11
Ministry Setting	14
Catechesis as a solution?	16
Limitations and Parameters	22
Objectives of this Project	26
2. A BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATION	27
Introduction	27
Yada (to know)	28
The Shema – Deut 6:4-9	34
Faith Training	42
Katēcheō	57
Summary	74
3. A LITERATURE REVIEW	76
Introduction	76

The Hermeneutical Context	76
Design and Methodology	80
Contemporary Praxis	106
Summary of Literature Review	118
4. PROJECT DESIGN	122
Introduction	122
Objectives	124
Design	124
Implementation	126
Assessment Instruments	127
Project Reflections	129
5. OUTCOMES AND CONCLUSION	135
Introduction	135
Outcomes	135
Conclusions	142
Recommended Changes	146
Next Steps	147
Appendix	
A. NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY	149
B. PRE-TEST	156
C. POST-TEST	162

D. D3: DISCIPLES DIGGING DEEPER CURRICULUM	168
BIBLIOGRAPHY	177
VITA	186

## ILLUSTRATIONS

### Figures

Figure 1: Guiding Beliefs of Moralistic Therapeutic Deism	2
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### Tables

Table 1: Meanings of <i>katēcheō</i>	59
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## **ABSTRACT**

The alarm bells are ringing in the world of youth ministry; young people are not sticking with Christianity. This thesis-project explores some of the reasons behind the exodus of young people from their faith and determines that one of the common traits amongst these young adults is a lack of deep theological understanding and ability to articulate what their faith means. This thesis-project will draw upon scripture to build a biblical case and theological framework for catechesis as a solution to this problem. It will draw from the church's historical use of catechesis, modern ministry and education practices to develop a sample catechism for pre-teens today. In particular, this thesis-project will test this sample catechism aimed at Pentecostal pre-teens to determine whether it will increase their knowledge of God and their ability to understand Him at a deeper level.

## CHAPTER ONE

### THE PROBLEM AND ITS SETTING

#### Introduction

In his book, *The Culturally Savvy Christian*, Dick Staub characterizes North American Christianity as an illiteracy of faith, an imitation of popular culture and he aptly labels the phenomenon as “Christianity-Lite.”<sup>1</sup> Sociologist Christian Smith has coined the phrase “Moralistic Therapeutic Deism,” (see figure 1) noting that teenagers who hold this view of Christianity tend to be less articulate about their faith, their religious beliefs, and its meaning or place in their lives.<sup>2</sup> This weakened faith, particularly in the case of Smith’s research, was common amongst young people who were leaving the Church. Whether it is called Christianity-Lite or Moralistic Therapeutic Deism, this diminished faith is not a new concept nor a new observation of North American culture. Calvin College Professor and author, William Romanowski, noted in his research that at the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the majority of North American Evangelicals acted contrarily to what they professed to believe about Jesus.<sup>3</sup> Two prominent North American scholars, J. I. Packer and Garry Parrett, echo these findings in their book on catechesis and describe the faith of the Evangelical Church as “superficial smatterings of truth, blurry notions about God and godliness, and thoughtlessness about the issues of living—career-wise, community-wise, family-wise, and church-wise.”<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Dick Staub, *The Culturally Savvy Christian* (San Francisco: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2007), 41-47.

<sup>2</sup> Christian Smith, *Soul Searching: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of American Teenagers* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 131.

<sup>3</sup> William D. Romanowski, *Eyes Wide Open* (Grand Rapids: Brazo Press, 2001), 30.

<sup>4</sup> J. I. Packer and Gary A. Parrett, *Grounded in the Gospel: Building Believers the Old-Fashioned Way* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2010), 16.

Figure 1: Guiding Beliefs of Moralistic Therapeutic Deism

**GUIDING BELIEFS OF MORALISTIC THERAPEUTIC DEISM**

1. A god exists who created and orders the world and watches over life on earth.
2. God wants people to be good, nice, and fair to each other, as taught in the Bible and by most world religions.
3. The central goal of life is to be happy and to feel good about oneself.
4. God is not involved in my life except when I need God to resolve a problem.
5. Good people go to heaven when they die.

Source: Kenda Creasy Dean, *Almost Christian: What the Faith of our Teenagers is Telling the American Church* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 14.

There is a major shift in North American Christianity that is affecting its young people. According to Smith, many young people in North America are not able to articulate simple concepts about their beliefs. Many of the young people questioned by Smith and his team regarding personal faith were unable to answer simple questions about God, faith, religion, or spiritual belief. By contrast, Smith and his team discovered that when questioned about relevant issues in which they had been well educated (i.e. the dangers of drug abuse, STDs) teenagers were quite knowledgeable and conversant. Although they were able to express themselves intelligently on certain issues, they were unable to express themselves effectively in regards to their faith. Thus, Smith and his team argue that teenagers in North America have not been well educated nor have they been given appropriate opportunity to express their faith in order to learn the theological language of their faith traditions.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Smith, *Soul Searching*, 133.

David Kinnaman, in his book *You Lost Me: Why Young Christians are Leaving Church And Rethinking Faith*, argues a pointed rationale for the exodus of young people from the Church. He believes that churches are failing to make an issue of “adequately preparing the next generation to follow Christ in a rapidly changing culture.”<sup>6</sup> To add fuel to this fire, Ross Douthat, a New York Times columnist, contends in his book *Bad Religion: How we became a nation of heretics*, that the Church does not have a strong Christian orthodox response to the shift in the North American Church toward Christianity-Lite; the theology of the Church, young and old, is weak.<sup>7</sup> The older generation is not passing on a strong faith; rather they are inadvertently passing on the weakened theology of Moralistic Therapeutic Deism.

In their book, *Sticky Faith: youth worker edition*, Dr. Kara Powell, Brad Griffin, and Dr. Cheryl Crawford summarize the findings of a research project called the “College Transition Project.” They report that many young people had an interesting and surprising way of expressing the gospel, in that 35 percent of the teens surveyed did not mention Jesus when answering the question of what it meant to be a Christian.<sup>8</sup> They also noted that “the kids who populate our youth groups often have an extremely superficial view of the gospel. They view the gospel like a jacket they can take on and off based on what they feel like doing that day.”<sup>9</sup> They believe that this shallow view is because students are mirroring what they see in the older generations of the Church.

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<sup>6</sup> David Kinnaman, *You Lost Me: Why Young Christians are Leaving Church and Rethinking Faith* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2011), 214, Kindle.

<sup>7</sup> This is because the dominant Christianity in North America is a therapeutic one which is more concerned about tolerance than it is about God’s truth. For more on heresy and the North American Church see Ross Douthat, *Bad Religion: How We Became a Nation of Heretics* (New York: Free Press, 2012).

<sup>8</sup> Kara E. Powell, Brad M. Griffen, and Cheryl A. Crawford, *Sticky Faith: Youth Worker Edition* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011), 29.

<sup>9</sup> Powell, Griffen and Crawford, *Sticky Faith*, 31.

## Shallow Faith

Kinnaman suggests that one of the broad reasons that many in the millennial<sup>10</sup> generation are leaving the Church is because of shallowness: “Among (Millennials), the most common perception of churches is that they are boring. Easy platitudes, proof texting, and formulaic slogans have anesthetized many young adults, leaving them with no idea of the gravity and power of following Christ.”<sup>11</sup> The Church has dumbed down Christianity to the point that it is easy to be a Christian, but not desirable. Douthat argues that the Church has built a Christianity that allows one to follow Christ “without having to accept any constraints on what that ‘following’ might mean.”<sup>12</sup> This means that Christians can make Jesus into their own image and only focus on the areas of His life or identity that they find the most agreeable and desirable (e.g. focusing on his love and grace and negating his call to holiness and right living). In *Christless Christianity*, Michael Horton illustrates this through the example of the ministry of Joel Osteen. According to Horton, Osteen represents a popular North American Christianity that does not leave room for pain or suffering, only for that which makes one happy; it is a self-saving, therapeutic, narcissistic religion.<sup>13</sup> Thus Kinnaman asks, “How can the Church nurture a deep, holistic faith in Christ that encompasses every area of life?”<sup>14</sup>

Drew Dyck, author and Managing Editor for Leadership Magazine, agrees with Kinnaman’s sentiments that this shallow faith is a problem for the Church. He reiterates

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<sup>10</sup> These are individuals born between the years 1984 – 2002.

<sup>11</sup> Kinnaman, *You Lost Me*, 1363, Kindle.

<sup>12</sup> Ross Douthat, *Bad Religion: How We Became a Nation of Heretics* (New York: Free Press, 2012), 178.

<sup>13</sup> Michael Horton, *Christless Christianity: The Alternative Gospel of the American Church* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2008), 65-100.

<sup>14</sup> Kinnaman, *You Lost Me*, 1363, Kindle.

the sentiments that millennials have had enough of Christians offering easy answers to difficult questions.<sup>15</sup> This shallow faith, according to Dyck is one of the reasons that young people are turned off by the Church. They see the hypocrisy in an older generation that do not know why they believe what they believe, nor do they have the answers that the younger generation are looking for.<sup>16</sup> Dyck argues that because the true demands of the gospel were never properly communicated to these young adults, they have drifted away from the Church. To drifters, being a Christian is not about sacrifice, it is about convenience.<sup>17</sup> Young people are not looking for a gospel that is easy and trite, but one that deals with real world issues. They long for ways to connect more deeply with one another and with God. They crave a church that will help them connect their theology to the authentic realities of life. They need a theology that is practical for life, one that provides solid answers to life's big questions.<sup>18</sup>

Dave Sawler argues, in *Before they Say Goodbye*, that “one of the reasons we have low retention and such shallow faith in our churches is that many people do not want the responsibility of parenting spiritually.”<sup>19</sup> He notes that “parental pressure is far more influential than peer pressure in most age groups. However, youth work is still necessary because of parental dysfunction.”<sup>20</sup> Gordon Neufeld argues this point as well in his book, *Hold on to Your Kids*, in that parents have the potential for great influence on their children, however there is a shift happening in culture that is moving parents out of

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<sup>15</sup> Drew Dyck, *Generation Ex-Christian: Why Young are Leaving the Faith...And How to Bring Them Back* (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2010), 36.

<sup>16</sup> Dyck, *Generation Ex-Christian*, 101.

<sup>17</sup> Dyck, *Generation Ex-Christian*, 176-77.

<sup>18</sup> Kinnaman, *You Lost Me*, 1983, Kindle.

<sup>19</sup> David Sawler, *Before They Say Goodbye: Thoughts on How to Keep This Generation* (Winnipeg, MB: Word Alive, 2011), 58.

<sup>20</sup> Sawler, *Before They Say Goodbye*, 23.

the picture and moving peers in. This shift is beyond the normal rebellion and independence of adolescence, it is the banding together of young people because they have been abandoned by the adults in their culture.<sup>21</sup> He argues that we must work to reverse this phenomenon of peer attachment and a parent based catechism could be helpful.<sup>22</sup>

Kinnaman states that “most young people lack a deep understanding of their faith. The trend of biblical illiteracy, which is problematic among most age-groups, has been on the increase”<sup>23</sup> since the early 1990’s. There also seems to be a disconnect between this biblical illiteracy and the perception of church going teens. Kinnaman reasons that though many teens who attend church believe they know the basic teachings of the Bible “very well,” they performed quite poorly when asked specific questions about those teachings.<sup>24</sup> This lack of biblical knowledge is mirrored by Jake Kircher in his book, *Teaching Teenagers in a Post-Christian World*, as he relays a story where he asks the teenagers that are with him on a missions trip, “What is the gospel?” only to be met with blank stares.<sup>25</sup>

This development of deeper faith must begin at a young age<sup>26</sup> when individuals are beginning to develop abstract and idealistic thinking. The onset of puberty in adolescence is the ideal time for that learning. It is when individuals are beginning to develop formal operational thought and solidifying their moral thinking. Adolescents are

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<sup>21</sup> See Chap Clark, *Hurt 2.0* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011) regarding the systemic abandonment of adolescents by Adults in North America.

<sup>22</sup> Gordon Neufeld and Gabor Maté, *Hold on to Your Kids: Why Parents Need to Matter More Than Peers* (New York: Ballantine Books, 2006), 31-44.

<sup>23</sup> Kinnaman, *You Lost Me*, 1738, Kindle.

<sup>24</sup> Kinnaman, *You Lost Me*, 1785, Kindle.

<sup>25</sup> Jake Kircher, *Teaching Teenagers in a Post-Christian World* (San Deigo: The Youth Cartel, 2014), 309, Kindle.

<sup>26</sup> Sawler, *Before They Say Goodbye*, 153-55.

the most moldable than any other age.<sup>27</sup> The age for the onset of puberty and its companion adolescence is between nine to fifteen years of age in girls and ten to thirteen years of age in boys.<sup>28</sup> This makes the pre-teen years a prime time to begin the process of catechesis in order to lay a solid and deep foundation for young people to grow in their relationship with Christ and commitment to their faith.

Kinnaman argues that it is not only the young people of the Church who lack a strong knowledge of Scripture or theology. This argument is echoed in a recent study which highlights that weekly Bible reading by Christian Canadians has decreased by over 50 percent since 1996.<sup>29</sup> Kinnaman believes that this decline in biblical knowledge is seen in all ages within the Church, though this generation of young people is facing a culture that has changed significantly from previous generations. He wonders whether this lack of knowledge will weaken the faith of young people and if such faith will be able to withstand the pressures and attacks from society. If their faith is frail, will such a frail faith be able to last?<sup>30</sup> Kenda Dean contends that the adult faith of the Church has already weakened the faith of young people,<sup>31</sup> which only further reinforces the need to educate pre-teens in their comprehension of theology. Theology is not simply a set of doctrines; it is also the experience between God and his creation. To develop a powerful faith that is able to withstand the cultural darts of today, young people must learn to

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<sup>27</sup> Alan E. Nelson, *KidLead: Growing Great Leaders* (Charleston: Booksurge Publishing, 2009), 41-46.

<sup>28</sup> Santrock, *Adolescence* (14th. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2012), 56.

<sup>29</sup> Rick Hiemstra, *Confidence, Conversation, and Community: Bible Engagement in Canada, 2013* (Toronto: Faith Today Publications, 2014), 10, accessed May 11, 2014, <http://www.bibleengagementstudy.ca/?wpdmdl=244>.

<sup>30</sup> Kinnaman, *You Lost Me*, 337, Kindle.

<sup>31</sup> Kenda C. Dean, *Almost Christian: What the Faith of our Teenagers is Telling the American Church* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 3-24.

create at a young age, the armor that can protect them against the temptation to accommodate to the non-kingdom values of the world (Eph 6:10f).

Kinnaman suggests that the Church in North America today is made up of adults who were never transformed by their faith as children or youth. The Church has turned discipleship into a mass production program, “a conveyor belt of development that industrializes the soul formation of young people—who eventually become adults with inch-deep, mile-wide faith.”<sup>32</sup> Sawler concurs with this assessment that faith development today does not have long lasting effects on people.<sup>33</sup> If both Kinnaman and Sawler are correct in their assessment of Christian discipleship then a solution to this mass production of Christians must be personalized and even individualized, somewhat like an IEP (Individualized Education Plan)<sup>34</sup> that schools use with students who need individual attention. Discipleship is about quality over quantity and takes time. As Kinnaman points out, though, despite the deceiving mass production of disciples, it is these very disciples that are at risk of losing quality in their discipleship. He argues for smaller sizes since there is substantial evidence in the field of Education that demonstrates that class size plays a large role in how effective a classroom is for learning. Education expert, Dr. Robert Marzano echoes this in his research, arguing that children learn most effectively in pairs and triads.<sup>35</sup> It is not a big stretch for one to assume that these same principles of class size and learning groups should also apply to the Church and youth discipleship

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<sup>32</sup> Kinnaman, *You Lost Me*, 1869, Kindle.

<sup>33</sup> Sawler, *Before They Say Goodbye*, 129.

<sup>34</sup> An IEP (Individualized Learning Plan), is a tool that the BC educational system uses when a student is performing below grade expectations due to special needs. See Darren Ausmus et al., “Individual Education Planning for Students with Special Needs,” Province of British Columbia Ministry of Education, November 2009, accessed March 5, 2015, <http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/specialed/docs/iepssn.pdf>.

<sup>35</sup> Robert J. Marzano, *The Art and Science of Teaching: A Comprehensive Framework for Effective Instruction* (Alexandria, VA: ASCD, 2007), 39-40.

should mirror this evidence.<sup>36</sup> Dr. Mick Nelson, Director of Discipleship at Broadway Church in Vancouver, Canada would agree with this principle. In an interview, he maintained that Pentecostal churches tend to be better at the strategy of zone defense in football; the focus is on the whole and not on individuals. He suggested that what we need to improve is in the man to man area of discipleship which focuses on the individuals. A rounded discipleship ministry needs both.<sup>37</sup>

### **Doubtless Faith**

Another broad reason that Kinnaman provides for this exodus of millennials from the Church in North America is that many young Christians believe the Church is not a safe place for them to express their doubts. Not only has the Church neglected to provide the education and opportunity to express one's faith, it has also failed in providing an atmosphere for allowing deep reflection and the questioning of faith. According to Kinnaman, the Church is raising a generation of young Christians who do not feel safe declaring their doubts within the walls of their own churches. They feel that in response to their honest probing questions, they receive pithy and meaningless answers meant to merely placate the questioner. The result is a younger generation no longer looking to an older and wiser generation for the answers to faith and life.<sup>38</sup>

Kinnaman believes that unexpressed doubt is one of the most powerful destroyers of faith. According to his research "many young people feel that the Church is too small of a container in which to carry their doubts. Fully one-third of young Christians (36%)

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<sup>36</sup> Kinnaman, *You Lost Me*, 1943, Kindle.

<sup>37</sup> Mick Nelson, interview by author, Vancouver, British Columbia, March 19, 2015.

<sup>38</sup> Kinnaman, *You Lost Me*, 105, Kindle.

agree that ‘I don’t feel that I can ask my most pressing life questions in church.’ One out of ten (10%) put it more bluntly: ‘I am not allowed to talk about my doubts in church.’”<sup>39</sup>

In his survey of young adult Canadian Christians, James Penner illustrates this struggle that young Christians feel judged by the Church because of their doubt. He quotes one young female: “And [Church] should be somewhere you go and you’re open about your struggles and problems and they should be accepting and talk me through it...it doesn’t help to look down your nose upon someone who’s already feeling bad about the doubts they have.”<sup>40</sup>

The “College Transition Project” discovered that this fear of expressing one’s doubts within the Church is not merely a young adult issue and that many of the teenagers surveyed who held doubts about their faith in high school did not verbally express these doubts. The teenagers that were able to express their doubts, however, were found to have a faith that was deemed “sticky,” meaning it was a faith that would stick past graduation.<sup>41</sup> Providing opportunity for Christians to develop the skill of expressing doubts at a young age, perhaps even before such doubts arise, can go a long way in helping teenagers feel free to express their doubts and spiritual wrestling. Hopefully the result of such an encouraging and accepting environment will allow teens to engage the Church with their faith instead of silently slipping out through the cracks.

What must be done to elicit change in this area so that the Church becomes a place where young people feel safe and are encouraged to express their honest doubts about faith. There must be a way in which the Church can foster a sense of curiosity and

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<sup>39</sup> Kinnaman, *You Lost Me*, 3078, Kindle.

<sup>40</sup> James Penner et al., *Hemorrhaging Faith: Why & When Canadian Young Adults are Leaving, Staying & Returning to the Church* (EFC, 2011), 62.

<sup>41</sup> Powell, Griffen and Crawford, *Sticky Faith*, 143.

allow young people the room to safely work through their doubt. Current educational practice<sup>42</sup> and Christian education<sup>43</sup> encourages teachers to use doubt to bring about deeper learning in children. Thus, a catechism for young people should be a safe place for questions and doubt. It is imperative that catechizers have proper training in how to handle doubt as well as the knowledge of how to allow pre-teens to explore their faith while keeping them from becoming sidetracked or venture too far off base theologically. A genesis of such an open culture must emerge many years before Christians are in their twenties; it must begin in their childhood and in particular as they enter adolescence. Doubt is a necessary part of faith, meaning that genuine doubts can lead toward authentic exploration and aid in the solidification of one's beliefs into strong convictions. Though one may argue that it is possible for doubt to have the opposite effect of strengthening faith or that doubt is not necessary for one to have strong convictions. Mark DeVries questions whether it might be better to ask our "students to write their 'Statements of Doubt' before they write their statements of faith."<sup>44</sup>

### **Hemorrhaging Faith**

Although much of the research regarding young adults has been done in the United States, many of these same findings are also typical of young adults in Canada. David Sawler, a Maritime PAOC pastor, has identified this exodus in Canada as well. He has written regarding this issue and developed some suggestions on how the Church can fight

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<sup>42</sup> Marzano, *Art and Science of Teaching*, 59.

<sup>43</sup> Ronald T. Habermas, *Introduction to Christian Education and Formation* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2008), 66-68.

<sup>44</sup> Mark DeVries, "Foreword" in *Teaching Teenagers in a Post-Christian World*, by Jake Kircher (San Diego: The Youth Cartel, 2014), 172, Kindle.

back against a weakened Christianity that is driving young Canadian Christians away from the Church.<sup>45</sup> Another Canadian who shares Sawler's concerns is Sociologist James Penner. A few years ago Penner and his research centre were commissioned by The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada and the Young Adult Roundtable to discover whether this young adult exodus from the Church was also happening in Canada. They surveyed and interviewed over 2100 Canadian young adults who were either raised Christian or became Christian before they reached young adulthood.<sup>46</sup> They discovered that many young people were leaving the Church, which confirmed the suspicions of Sawler and others. It also correlated with Smith's findings in the United States. One difference in the research between Smith and Penner though, is that Penner also identified young adults who were not leaving the Church and were still highly involved. His research gives insight as to why young people might leave, but also why young people stay. One of the findings that pertains to this thesis-project is that the young people who stayed belonged to a dynamic Community that passed down the faith from one generation to the next.<sup>47</sup>

Sawler insists that one of the reasons for the exodus of young people is that although they love youth group, the youth leaders and the youth pastor, they did not have a deep relationship with Christ. Thus, when they are able to choose whether to go to church or not, they are not tethered by a relationship with Christ.<sup>48</sup> It is imperative that a relationship with Jesus be fostered by helping pre-teens gain a deeper understanding of Him. Yet youth leaders do not always have tools to do this, nor do they have the answers

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<sup>45</sup> See David Sawler, *Before They Say Goodbye: Thoughts on How to Keep This Generation* (Winnipeg, MB: Word Alive Press, 2011).

<sup>46</sup> Penner et al., *Hemorrhaging Faith*, 116.

<sup>47</sup> Penner et al., *Hemorrhaging Faith*, 52-53, 57-58, 112-113.

<sup>48</sup> David Sawler, *Goodby Generation: A Conversation About Why Youth and Young Adults Leave the Church* (Hamilton, Ont: Ponder Publishing, 2008), 136-137.

for the difficult questions asked regarding the Bible since they too may be struggling with the same questions and doubts. Also, they may have not been adequately prepared to deal with these questions in their own lives. To this generation of young people it seems as though the Church does not have a response to these deep questions of faith which, according to Sawler, further deepens the seed of doubt that has already been planted.<sup>49</sup>

In the past it was a given that when teenagers found themselves in college or university, they could expect to find opposition to their beliefs. There was an expectation that there will always be teachers who teach evolution, have agnostic leanings, or atheistic principles. The difference today is that teenagers do not need to leave home to experience this challenge to their beliefs. As well, teenagers face this opposition at earlier ages than ever before. Many Middle Schoolers are on social media sites such as Youtube, Facebook, and Twitter which exposes them to various viewpoints that typically would not come their way until high school and university. As children begin to change cognitively and think more abstractly and idealistically it is important to prepare their minds. Sawler's work brings to the forefront an important question, "How do we prepare our young people to face a culture that is anti-Christian and full of doubt?" He suggests that the Church must respond with humility, love, truth, teaching, and reliance on the power of God's word.<sup>50</sup> Sawler argues that many of these drifting millennials have been checked out of church for a long time and only attended during their adolescence because they were forced to.<sup>51</sup> Thus, there is a need for the Church to be open to exploring the

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<sup>49</sup> Sawler, *Before They Say Goodbye*, 151.

<sup>50</sup> Sawler, *Goodby Generation*, 88-93.

<sup>51</sup> Sawler, *Before They Say Goodbye*, 205.

difficult questions of faith that Christians, young people especially, are raising about faith.<sup>52</sup>

### **Ministry Setting**

This lack of theological depth is disconcerting for the Canadian Church as a whole and proves to be a dilemma for this researchers denomination<sup>53</sup> in particular, the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada (PAOC). Though there has yet to be formal data on young people leaving the Church within the PAOC, it is a deep growing concern. The PAOC has launched an initiative to see growth in the denomination and part of that initiative is to focus more on theological teaching within our denomination.

With [the] lack of Scripture engagement both within and outside of the Church, it is therefore not a surprise that we are increasingly dealing with people who have a self-determined view of truth. It is a huge obstacle to truth-based mission when many of the persons who should be transformed by God's Word and communicating its truth in word and deed are neglecting regular interaction with the Scriptures, and are themselves practitioners of spiritual fusion. We will share this study's conclusions<sup>54</sup> and continue to work through the next steps that the Church must take to see strong disciples grounded in the Word.<sup>55</sup>

In light of this desire and the thought that a deeper understanding of one's faith may help a young adult remain committed to the Church this project will focus on increasing the theological comprehension in pre-teens in the BC/Yukon district of the PAOC.

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<sup>52</sup> Sawler, *Before They Say Goodbye*, 155.

<sup>53</sup> The term denomination is used for simple clarity. The PAOC considers itself a Fellowship of churches as opposed to a denomination.

<sup>54</sup> The study mentioned here was commissioned by the Canadian Bible Forum and The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada. Rick Hiemstra, "Confidence, Conversation and Community: Bible Engagement in Canada, 2013," Canadian Bible Forum, 2014, accessed March 2015, <http://www.bibleengagementstudy.ca>.

<sup>55</sup> David Wells, "PAOC 2020 Initiative – October 2014 Update," accessed March 2015, <https://paoc.org/docs/default-source/David-Wells-Updates/paoc-2020-initiative---october-2014-update.pdf>.

In order to better understand the specific needs of this age group this researcher surveyed a segment of pastors within the district<sup>56</sup> at one of their yearly leadership meetings. This survey was given to pastors from a variety of ministry positions in order to get a fuller picture of the issue. The main question behind the survey was, “Do pre-teens in the BC/Yukon District need more theological training in order to increase their theological comprehension?” Of the pastors surveyed over 88% have contact with the pre-teens in their church once or twice a week. Ninety-seven percent felt that there is a “moderate” to “very much” of a need for more theological training for pre-teens in their churches. An interesting finding from the survey was that when asked the question, “For the pre-teens in your church, how would you rate their ability to successfully explain the following theological concepts to you?” most of the pastors identified the weakest theological concepts as the Trinity, Eschatology, the Sacraments, and Spirit Baptism. It is easy to understand why the sacraments would not be high on the list since Pentecostals are not known for their sacramental theology, but what is surprising and even disturbing is how low Spirit Baptism and Eschatology<sup>57</sup> scored since these are two doctrines that have historically and distinctly set Pentecostals apart. What is equally baffling, although helpful in explaining the previous result, is that when asked, “To what extent should pre-teens in your church be able to understand the following theological concepts?” most of the pastors gave the lowest score for Eschatology and Spirit Baptism. The theological concepts, in which the surveyed pastors felt their pre-teens should best understand, were

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<sup>56</sup> This survey was presented at a cluster leader’s meeting in October 2014. The BC/Yukon PAOC divides its constituents into geographical and ministry specific (i.e. youth, associate, lead) groupings called clusters. The cluster leaders are the pastor’s in each location and ministry that have been identified to be key leaders within the district.

<sup>57</sup> This is reflective of credential issues in the PAOC BC/Yukon district that is being addressed at the Bible College level, however there needs to be more exposure at the local church level.

salvation, sin, biblical authority, and the Church. These are encouraging findings and will also help to shape the focus of this study.

So what is to be done about this lack of theological understanding in young people today? Christian Smith has argued that the vast majority of US teens that he surveyed were unable to articulate their faith in a meaningful way<sup>58</sup> and Kenda Creasy Dean also reiterates Smith's findings in her book, *Almost Christian*, noting that the need is great for a catechism to help translate faith into a language that youth can understand and express.<sup>59</sup> Smith and Dean are not alone in these thoughts. Gary Parrett and Steve Kang in *Teaching the Faith, Forming the Faithful* echo this need for a catechism as a method of passing down the faith to the younger generation.<sup>60</sup> Developing a catechetical discipleship model for youth ministry in the PAOC can help counter this epidemic of weak theology as well as support the denomination in its desire to increase theological comprehension across the board. It is a small but sure step in the right direction of strengthening the Church to ensure it does not become enveloped in a weak faith.

### **Catechesis as a Solution?**

In post-apostolic Christianity the term *katēcheō*, from which the term catechesis is derived, came to be understood as communicating the content of faith by instruction and was mainly used for baptismal preparation. When the Church replaced adult baptism with child baptism the term came to mean Christian education in general. By the middle ages this catechesis had shifted from individual instruction to the instruction of groups or

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<sup>58</sup> Smith, *Soul Searching*, 267-68.

<sup>59</sup> Dean, *Almost Christian*, 115-17.

<sup>60</sup> Gary A. Parrett and S. Steve Kang, *Teaching the Faith, Forming the Faithful: A Biblical Vision for Education in the Church* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2009), 88-89.

cultures that came to Christ en masse. In the early 16<sup>th</sup> century Erasmus insisted that all children who were baptized should be catechized and tested to see if they understood baptism and were willing to conform to it. Around this same time Martin Luther developed his large and small catechisms for clergy and household leaders. Catechesis is still valid in the Church today though it has shifted from the rote learning of abstract doctrinal truths to a form that connects the truth of the word of God to present day reality.<sup>61</sup> Catechesis today must be designed to inform the student of the basic beliefs of the Christian faith and lead them to a confession of faith in a way that allows students to individually express their faith in the modern world.

Both Gary Parrett and J.I. Packer argue, in their book *Grounded in the Gospel: Building Believers the old-fashioned way*, that catechesis is foundational to the generational practice of spiritual formation that all churches should be taking part. They believe that the decline in this practice is the source of the juvenilization of evangelicalism<sup>62</sup> and as long as the Church ignores this decline, faith development will continue to be stunted and the theological inadequacies of the Evangelical Church will not disappear.<sup>63</sup> Thus they call for a restoration of a catechetical practice in the Church again today. It is the premise of this thesis-project that this restoration of catechesis must be a part of the discipleship of pre-teens in the Church.

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<sup>61</sup> *The Encyclopedia of Christianity*, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1999), s.vv.

“catechesis,” “catechism.” For a fuller explanation of the history and shift in catechesis see, Susan Gantt, “Catechetical Instruction as an Educational Process for the Teaching of Doctrine to Children in Southern Baptist Churches” (PhD diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2004), accessed November 13, 2013, ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

<sup>62</sup> Packer and Parrett, *Grounded*, 9. For an in-depth analysis on the juvenilizing of Christian faith in North America see, Thomas Bergler, *The Juvenilization of American Christianity* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 2012).

<sup>63</sup> Packer and Parrett, *Grounded*, 17.

Kinnaman highlights that a new theology is not needed, but rather a new way of teaching it is, since the methods the Church currently uses today is clearly not producing lasting results.<sup>64</sup> It is essential that the catechism of old is honored and learned from; however it is equally imperative that the catechism used today is one that will connect to pre-teens on their cultural level and with their learning styles in mind.<sup>65</sup>

This generation has more knowledge at their finger-tips than they could possibly absorb, yet they do not possess the wisdom in how to apply it to the world they are living in. Wisdom can come from one's own life experience as well as the life experience of a respected adult. A proper catechism must be taught by those who have experience and wisdom in order to impart a deep understanding of faith to the pre-teens of the Church. Kenda Creasy Dean maintains that Luther's small catechism did this by taking the spiritual learning into homes. It was not solely the responsibility of the Church to train up young people in the ways of God, but also the home. This was and is a powerful perspective because, according to Dean, "children drew direct connections between religious instruction at the dinner table and the lives of people who loved them."<sup>66</sup> Catechesis translates the Biblical doctrine and church traditions into practical living that will help young people anchor their identity in Christ.<sup>67</sup> Teenagers who do not have a language to understand Christ will not be able to imagine an identity in Him.<sup>68</sup> The fact that catechism is connected to daily living allows it to be a powerful discipleship tool. Susan Gantt argues, in her dissertation on catechesis, that catechism is necessary because

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<sup>64</sup> Kinnaman, *You Lost Me*, 135.

<sup>65</sup> Parrett and Kang, *Teaching*, 89.

<sup>66</sup> Dean, *Almost Christian*, 111.

<sup>67</sup> Dean, *Almost Christian*, 112.

<sup>68</sup> Dean, *Almost Christian*, 142.

children are not going to extract key Christian doctrines from Bible stories without intentional instruction.<sup>69</sup> Catechesis provides an intergenerational learning experience. It not only allows young people to grow stronger in their faith, it also causes parents, who are teaching it, to solidify their faith as well. This is how the Church becomes a community able to deeply understand and communicate faith within the walls of the Church and also effectively share their faith confidently with the world around them.

Kinnaman states that “the transmission of faith from one generation to the next relies on the messy and sometimes flawed process of young people finding meaning for themselves in the traditions of their parents.”<sup>70</sup> The struggle is that parents and youth do not speak the same language, nor do adolescents understand the world in the way that adults do. This can lead to frustration and so Kinnaman and others would argue that in order to effectively pass down the faith from one generation to the next, the older generation must endeavor to understand the culture of today.<sup>71</sup>

Teenagers do not need to be taught the language of their current culture; they live in that world constantly. Neither do teens need help expressing their faith in their own cultural language; however they do require aid in expressing it effectively.<sup>72</sup> Teens need guidance in order to learn the language of the Church. The Church needs to build a culture that does not isolate teens from their daily world, but allows them to understand and express their faith in deep and meaningful ways. In order to accomplish this, the

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<sup>69</sup> Susan Gantt, “Catechetical Instruction as an Educational Process for the Teaching of Doctrine to Children in Southern Baptist Churches” (PhD diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2004), 26, accessed November 13, 2013, ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

<sup>70</sup> Kinnaman, *You Lost Me*, 520.

<sup>71</sup> Walt Mueller has been teaching this for over 30 years and has great resources on his website [www.cpyu.org](http://www.cpyu.org) as well as a number of books to help parents and Christian adults navigate the culture of today.

<sup>72</sup> Smith, *Soul Searching*, 131-2.

Church must be an environment in which teenagers are able to learn the religious language of Christianity. Christian Smith highlights the need for this context:

Religious language is like any other language: to learn how to speak it, one needs first to listen to native speakers using it a lot, and then one needs plenty of practice at speaking it oneself. Many U.S. teenagers, it appears, are not getting a significant amount of such exposure and practice and so are simply not learning the religious language of their faith traditions.<sup>73</sup>

The most obvious struggle is in finding those who are capable of teaching this language. If, as Smith and others believe, North American Christianity has morphed into a therapeutic religion passed down from one generation to the next, then the difficulty will be in finding one who speaks the language of “Christianese.” Though it may appear that the Church has failed to pass down its beliefs to the next generation, the reality is that the Church has been and continues to be effective in passing down its beliefs as the teens of today are being socialized by these beliefs.<sup>74</sup> The problem is that the belief system which is being taught by the Church and which the young people are absorbing is not the Christianity of the Bible.<sup>75</sup> Smith argues that “the language and therefore experience of trinity, holiness, sin, grace, justification, sanctification, church, eucharist, heaven and hell appear, among most Christian teenagers in the United States at the very least to be supplanted by the language of happiness, niceness, and an earned heavenly reward.”<sup>76</sup>

There is a need for a deep and practical catechesis that gives more opportunity for significant expression of one’s religious experiences and beliefs. The conclusion that

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<sup>73</sup> Smith, *Soul Searching*, 133.

<sup>74</sup> Smith, *Soul Searching*, 170.

<sup>75</sup> The length of this paper limits the ability to delve into how North American Christianity is not biblical. To read more on this idea see, Michael Horton, *Christless Christianity* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2008); Ross Douthat, *Bad Religion* (New York: Free Press, 2012); Kenda Creasy Dean, *Almost Christian* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010); Christian Smith, *Soul Searching* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005).

<sup>76</sup> Smith, *Soul Searching*, 171.

Smith and his colleagues arrived at concerning the inability of teenagers to articulate their faith was not that they were incapable of deep understanding and expression, rather they had simply not been educated in discussing faith nor had they been given the opportunity to practice speaking about their faith.<sup>77</sup> Author and reformed theologian Michael Horton echoes this sentiment in his book, *Christless Christianity*. He believes that young people today do not give much serious thought, reflection, or examination to their beliefs and are not able to relate them to daily life. He states that “many young people seem to be living on the hype and the familiar circle of friends in the youth group, both of which eventually lose their influence, especially for those who attend college.”<sup>78</sup>

This idea of a faith system that is more in tune with ones’ group of friends or peers is what James Fowler would call “synthetic/conventional” faith.<sup>79</sup> James Fowler, who is most known for his book *Stages of Faith*, defines this stage of faith development as “conventional, in that it is seen as being everybody’s faith system or the faith system of the entire community. And it is synthetic in that it is non analytical.”<sup>80</sup> There is a need to help young people move beyond this level of faith development by helping them to explore their beliefs on a deeper level. This reflection happens when Christians experience an event or perspective that causes them to critically evaluate their own beliefs and values, which frequently occurs when young adults leave home.<sup>81</sup> According to Smith’s research most teens have never been asked by an adult about “what they believed and how it mattered in their life.”<sup>82</sup> Helping teens find significance in their

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<sup>77</sup> Smith, *Soul Searching*, 133.

<sup>78</sup> Horton, *Christless Christianity*, 41.

<sup>79</sup> James Fowler, *Stages of Faith: The Psychology of Human Development and the Quest for Meaning* (New York: HarperCollins, 1981), 151-173.

<sup>80</sup> Fowler, *Stages of Faith*, 167.

<sup>81</sup> Fowler, *Stages of Faith*, 173.

<sup>82</sup> Smith, *Soul Searching*, 133.

beliefs by helping them to connect it to real life, before they leave home, may play a pivotal role in a catechetical model of youth discipleship. This can be accomplished by questioning teens about their faith. These adults would not only help teens to articulate their faith, but would be models and illustrations of how faith matters in real life. Kenda Creasy Dean, in her book *Almost Christian*, finds that youth who are devoted to church and religion are able to discuss their faith in a way that suggests they had given their belief system some thought. She argues that a place to learn and practice is needed in order to enable teenagers to articulate their faith and become committed to the Church beyond high school.<sup>83</sup> Parents and the Church are key components in this spiritual development as they give teens opportunities to express and reflect on their beliefs. As well, the older generations of the Church are able to help young Christians become more open to God's truth by modeling how God's word is supposed to be lived out as they interact with one another.<sup>84</sup> A teacher of catechism is charged with the special task of grounding "worshippers of every age in the truths Christians live by and in the ways Christians are to live by those truths."<sup>85</sup>

### **Limitations and Parameters**

Is this the answer for the PAOC? This researcher argues that catechism is part of the answer though it does pose some challenges that must be overcome before it can be used as an effective tool in youth ministry. Packer and Parrett give three general obstacles for

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<sup>83</sup> Dean, *Almost Christian*, 42.

<sup>84</sup> Gantt, "Catechetical Instruction," 28.

<sup>85</sup> Packer and Parrett, *Grounded*, 17.

restoring catechism to the Church as well there are some obstacles specific to the PAOC BC/Yukon District.

Firstly, Packer and Parrett acknowledge that there has been a turn away from external authority in western culture and this has permeated the Church. In this culture there is no objective truth or authority that all must obey. The struggle this poses is that “catechesis assumes the existence of authoritative truth that needs to be taught.”<sup>86</sup>

Secondly, Packer and Parrett point out that there is a resistance to authoritative instruction within the Church. No doubt this is influenced by the rejection of objective truth and the rise of individualism within North American culture. They argue that more time and focus has been given to learning Bible stories than there has been to grounding men and women in the truths of God, which has given the Church a faith where “personal fantasies about God replace the Church’s dogma as our authority, a hermeneutic of habitual distrust and suspicion of dogma establishes itself, and dogma becomes a dirty word, loaded with overtones of obscurantism, tunnel vision, unreality, superstition, and mental enslavement.”<sup>87</sup> Thirdly, Packer and Parrett, identify the busyness of church life as an obstacle for reintroducing catechesis. Churches are already full of activities and events and in order to add another aspect to church life would mean that something else must go.<sup>88</sup> This poses a problem when that something else is a tradition held in the Church, or a beloved program. This is particularly difficult in PAOC churches since catechesis has never been a part and in many cases has a negative connotation.

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<sup>86</sup> Packer and Parrett, *Grounded*, 11.

<sup>87</sup> Packer and Parrett, *Grounded*, 11.

<sup>88</sup> Packer and Parrett, *Grounded*, 12.

The survey of BC/Yukon PAOC pastors identified three main concerns in using catechism in their churches. The first concern was summed up in two negative challenges. The first challenge that was common to many of the pastors was the negative perspectives that Pentecostals have toward catechism. Many of the pastors felt that using a catechism could influence churches towards a more intellectual and less applied theology. Pentecostals, historically, have been moved to action by the Spirit and discipleship must not merely be informational, it must incite action. One pastor responded this way, “If these topics are not applied what is the point in the training?” This statement sums up a common belief amongst Pentecostal pastors and churchgoers. The second challenge was the negative connotation that the term “catechism” carries, especially for Pentecostals. The responses ranged from arguing that “catechism refers to Catholic Church indoctrination” to believing that families of non-churched youth will accuse the Church of brainwashing their children.

The second concern from a PAOC standpoint was that many pastors believe that catechism is outdated. Kinnaman agrees that there needs to be a change, that “as a faith community, we need a whole new mind to see that the way we develop a young people’s faith—the way we have been teaching them to engage the world as disciples of Christ—is inadequate for the issues, concerns, and sensibilities of the world we ask them to change for God.”<sup>89</sup> Teaching must change, not because theology is changing or the Church’s understanding of Scripture has uncovered new interpretations; rather it must change because culture and people have changed. Teenagers learn differently now than in the

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<sup>89</sup> Kinnaman, *You Lost Me*, 169, Kindle.

past or at least there is more awareness of their different learning styles and how technology has affected learning.

The third concern raised in the survey is regarding who will teach the catechism. This is especially troubling in PAOC circles since catechism has not been part of our tradition nor has there been any training in it. Many of the pastors surveyed believed that they were the ones responsible for teaching catechism. This makes sense since they would be the most theologically qualified, but it would not make sense to add one more responsibility on the shoulders of the pastors. Some argued that it should be parents who do the catechizing. Mike McGarry, in his doctoral thesis-project, noted that “parents have often been told to do with their children what they are not equipped to do because they have never been disciplined themselves.”<sup>90</sup> This echoes a concern of other parents as well. One parent of young children, when asked about doing catechism at home, responded by saying that she would have no clue what to teach or how to teach it.

This thesis-project will focus on the British Columbia and Yukon district of the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada and the concerns noted above will help to guide the methodology, not only of the catechism but also of how this catechism will be introduced to churches and parents. This thesis-project will not be able to address each challenge expressed by the PAOC pastors surveyed however they provide valuable information in preparing the catechism. This thesis-project will explore teaching philosophies and the best current teaching practices alongside past and current catechetical methodology in order to find the best pedagogy for catechism today. The target group of study is pre-teen individuals who identify as Christians and regularly attend church and/or youth group.

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<sup>90</sup> Michael McGarry, “Youth Ministry as Bridge Between Church and Home” (DMin Thesis-Project: Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, 2014), 7 accessed April 1, 2015, TREN.

They will take part in a four-week catechism program with their church and homes. At the beginning of the four weeks the participating pre-teens will be given a specific pre-test survey which will be repeated at the end of the four weeks in order to ascertain the perceived value of the catechism, the level of increase in theological comprehension, and the interest in a future, more developed, catechism.

This thesis-project is not meant to develop an entire catechism for the PAOC, rather it is meant to explore how the churches in the PAOC can be intentional about increasing theological comprehension in Christian pre-teens. Thus a catechetical template will be developed and tested. The hope—which is beyond the scope of this project—is that this deepening of understanding in their faith will help pre-teens stay connected to their faith and their church once they graduate and leave youth ministry.

### **Objectives of this Project**

- To ascertain whether catechesis can increase theological comprehension in Christian pre-teens.
- To develop and test a template of a Pentecostal catechism in the BC/Yukon district of the PAOC in order to ascertain whether this type of program would be useful on a national scale in for the denomination.

## CHAPTER TWO

### A BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATION

#### Introduction

Dr. Daryl Busby's definition of Christian Education is an insightful place to begin building a theological foundation for catechesis: "Christian learning is the lifelong process of partnering with the Holy Spirit and a Christian community to equip people to press towards appropriate Spiritual maturity in Christ."<sup>1</sup> A significant partnership is evident in this definition of Christian learning which is fundamental in helping young people become more articulate in their faith and stronger in their commitment to Christ and to the Church. The partnership between the Christian community and the Spirit of God is the context or framework in which catechesis should take place and is foundational for catechesis in youth discipleship.

The key to this partnership is ensuring that the theology taught is balanced with life experience. Michael Horton claims that right doctrine will lead to right doxology which will lead to right service.<sup>2</sup> This however, seems lacking since faith is not simply intellectual assent (Jas 2:19); it is an allegiance to something<sup>3</sup> and that allegiance usually plays out on the stage of relationships. It is in the personal experience of relationship that one comes to learn and own a belief system. One needs to experience a personal relationship with Jesus in order to express loyalty and allegiance to him. One needs to

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<sup>1</sup> This definition was articulated in Dr. Busby's class "Theory and Theology of Learning", Spring 2010. Dr. Busby is the Director of the Doctor of Ministry Program and Dean of the Canadian Baptist Seminary at ACTS seminaries of Trinity Western University in British Columbia, Canada.

<sup>2</sup> Michael Horton, *Christless Christianity: The Alternative Gospel of the American Church* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2008), 157.

<sup>3</sup> James Fowler, *Stages of Faith: The Psychology of Human Development and the Quest for Meaning* (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 1981), 9-15.

experience faith through action to grow a complete faith (Jas 1:19-25; 2:14-26). Thus perhaps an amendment to Horton's statement ought to read: "Right doctrine *experienced* (acted upon), leads to right doxology and right service." In order to build a culture that young people can deeply understand and express their faith in a particular community, this doctrine and experience must come together through catechesis. To better understand how doctrine and experience work together it is helpful to examine the Hebrew understanding of *yada* (to know).

### **Yada (To Know)**

The Hebrew verb *yada* means "to know." Though it has an array of applications depending on the context (i.e. morally, relationally, intellectually, practically), it is typically used for God's knowledge, man's knowledge, or animals' knowledge. *Yada* can indicate a cognitive type of knowing; information that is gained through observation and/or reflection (Gen 8:11). It can also indicate a relational or experiential type of knowing; suggesting that one can gain knowledge through the interaction or experience with an object. This relational aspect is witnessed in scripture as God's people are consistently called upon to truly know their God by acknowledging Him in every area of life (Prov 3:6; 1 Kgs 8:37; 2 Chr 6:24, 26; Matt 10:32; Heb 13:15). God wants a relationship and active acknowledgement, not passive or factual recognition of Him. He wants to be truly known, because only then we will be able to love Him and other

people.<sup>4</sup> This suggests that to know something is more than just retaining intellectual ideas about an object; there is also an experiential and relational aspect.<sup>5</sup>

The Hebrew noun for knowledge (*da'at*), which has the same root as *yada*, furthers one's understanding of knowledge in its use for "technical knowledge or ability such as that needed for building the tabernacle and temple (Exod 31:3; 35:31; 1 Kgs 7:14)."<sup>6</sup> This suggests that there is a practical element to knowing. *Yada* is not merely a verb meaning a cognitive and relational knowledge, it also has an active or practical component. This is evidenced when it is used in parallel with verbs such as *shema* (to hear – Ps 78:3; Isa 6:9; 33:13; 40:21, 28; 48:8; Jer 6:18) which implies an active component of doing and the verb *ra'ah* (to see/perceive – 1 Sam 12:17) which indicates a deeper understanding or internal perceiving. This suggests that the act of "knowing" means gaining knowledge, perceiving it at a deeper level, and acting upon it. These three are used together to indicate a fuller understanding of knowledge (Num 24:16; Deut 29:4; Job 5:27). This paper will explore these three dimensions of *yada*—practical, relational/experiential, intellectual/cognitive—in an effort to build the biblical case for the importance of catechesis.

### Practical Yada

Schottroff describes the use of *yada* as "the recognition that results from the deliberate application of the senses, from investigation and testing, from consideration and

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<sup>4</sup> Eugene E. Carpenter and Philip W. Comfort. *Holman Treasury of Key Bible Words: 200 Greek and 200 Hebrew Words Defined and Explained* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2000), 105.

<sup>5</sup> James Strong, *The New Strong's Concise Concordance & Vine's Concise Dictionary of the Bible* (Nashville, Thomas Nelson, 1999), 209.

<sup>6</sup> Paul R. Gilchrest, "yada," in *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, ed. R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer, Jr. and Bruce K. Waltke, vol. 1 (Chicago: Moody Press, 1980).

reflection.”<sup>7</sup> This indicates that the verb *yada* involves action, whether it is the external action of investigating or the internal action of reflecting. This is especially true in its imperative form. Twelve of the thirty-five times it appears in the imperative Qal form in the Old Testament; it is translated as an action (i.e. consider, investigate, learn, observe, acknowledge). Knowledge is gained by seeking (Jer 5:1), exploring or investigating (Eccl 7:25), inquiring of God (Judg 18:15), finding (Eccl 8:17), examining (Jer 6:27; 12:3), pondering (Ps 103:4; 144:3), and gaining insight (Isa 1:3; 6:9; 40:12).<sup>8</sup> *Yada* “is realized through practical involvement with the object of knowledge.”<sup>9</sup> For example, when the verb is translated as acknowledgement of God, there is an action implied (Prov 3:5-6 – “in all your *ways* acknowledge Him”).

#### Relational/Experiential Yada

The idea of interacting or experiencing knowledge is also evident in the way *yada* is used. It refers primarily to “the sensory awareness of objects and circumstances in one’s environment attained through involvement with them and through the information of others.”<sup>10</sup> The most common way that this is expressed is in the parallel use of *yada* (to know), *shema* (to hear), and *ra’a* (to see/perceive) (Exod 3:7; Lev 5:1; Num 24:16f; Deut 29:3(4); 33:9; Isa 32:3f; 48:6). In these parallelisms *yada* functions as the primary term of which the other sensory terms are conduits. *Yada* is more than just knowing with the

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<sup>7</sup> W. Schottroff, “yd’,” in *Theological Lexicon of the Old Testament*, eds. by Ernst Jenni, & Claus Westerman, trans. by Mark E. Biddle, vol. 2 (Peabody, Mass: Hendrickson Publishers, 1997), 512.

<sup>8</sup> Schottroff, “yd’,” 512.

<sup>9</sup> Schottroff, “yd’,” 514.

<sup>10</sup> Schottroff, “yd’,” 511.

intellect<sup>11</sup> it is knowing through the senses.

*Yada* also has a relational component that is used to express relationship. It can be used to depict an acquaintance with someone (Gen 29:5), an intimate friendship (Exod 33:17; Deut 34:10), sexual intercourse (Gen 1:4; 19:8; Num 31:17, 35), or to describe one's relationship to the divine: other gods (Deut 13:3, 7, 14) or YHWH (1 Sam 2:12; 3:7).<sup>12</sup> Knowing God is intimately connected to one's relationship with God and the action this relationship produces. To know God one must delve beyond the intellectual knowledge of Him, and experience God through worship, study, and service.

Discipleship must understand that cognitive knowledge of God is only the beginning; it is a means to understand the person of God and live in obedience to Him. One who knows and sees has a greater likelihood to act. If an individual encounters a fire, prior knowledge and understanding of fire (i.e. getting burned) will determine how one reacts in the situation. The same is true of a life following Christ. If a believer knows information about God but does not have relationship or experience with Him, then his or her reaction will be different from one who does. Understanding comes from experience (e.g. the pain of being burned by fire will give one a greater understanding of the dangers than just words in a book). Relationship is an important aspect of knowing God through experiencing Him. Relationship with Him is an important aspect of catechesis and discipleship because it allows the student to know, understand, and act in obedience toward God.

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<sup>11</sup> G. Johannes Botterweck and J. Bergman. "yada'," in *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, vol. 5, ed. by G. Johannes Botterweck, & Helmer Ringgren, trans. by David E. Green (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1986), 463.

<sup>12</sup> Gilchrest, "yada," 366.

This seems to contradict Horton's assertion that right doctrine leads to right behaviour. It would seem that there needs to be some sort of relationship (interaction or experience) with the object of knowledge in a way that brings a fuller understanding which leads to action. Simply knowing something as true may not necessarily motivate right action (Jas 1:22-24; 2:19), however experiencing something as true can increase the chances of influenced behaviour.

### Intellectual/Cognitive Yada

Gilchrest notes that though knowledge is usually gained by experience, it is also acquired through contemplation and reflection (Prov 1:4; 2:6; 5:2; Eccl 1:18).<sup>13</sup> The closest synonyms to *yada* are *bin* (to discern) and *naker* (to recognize),<sup>14</sup> which indicates an internal cognitive aspect of knowing. This deeper understanding of knowledge that goes beyond the base level of memorization is made evident in the way that *yada* is used with *ra'a* (to see, to perceive). In some cases knowing and seeing are used as a result of one another or in conjunction with each other (Deut 4:35; 1 Sam 12:17; 14:38; 18:28; 23:23; 25:17; 2 Sam 24:13; 1 Kgs 20:7; 2 Kgs 5:7; Isa 41:20; Jer 2:19; 5:1). For example, the writer of Deuteronomy says in 4:35, "To you it was shown (*ra'a*) that you might know (*yada*) that the LORD, He is God." The writer is reminding Israel of the wonders and miracles they had seen by God along their journey. Their knowledge was not memorization of facts, but a deeper knowledge that came through seeing and perceiving the power of their God. Knowledge is not a simple memorization of truths and facts,

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<sup>13</sup> Gilchrest, "yada," 366.

<sup>14</sup> Gilchrest, "yada," 366.

rather it is a deepening layer of understanding that allows a student to have a greater grasp on the subject.<sup>15</sup>

### Knowledge

To round out the discussion on the Hebrew verb “to know” it is important to examine its corresponding noun *da'at* (knowledge). According to Gilchrest, *da'at*, in the Old Testament, has the connotation of wisdom and understanding of the law, being able to distinguish between right and wrong.<sup>16</sup> It can be translated as discernment between good/right and evil/wrong (Gen 3:5; Deut 1:39; 2 Sam 19:36; Ps 119:66; Isa 7:15; Jonah 4:11). Knowledge is linked to living. How we live, either in wisdom or in folly, is directly linked to our knowledge or lack of knowledge of God. Knowledge of God leads to good actions but lack of knowledge leads to evil actions. Gilchrest illustrates this well with a comparison of knowledge of God and a lack of knowledge of God:

The man who has a right relationship with God confesses him and obeys him. To do justice and righteousness and to judge the cause of the poor and the needy is to know God (Jer 22:15-16)... Where there is no knowledge of God there is swearing, lying, killing, stealing, committing adultery and breaking all bonds (Hos 4:1-2). Such will bring destruction upon a people (Hos 4:6; cf Isa 5:13).<sup>17</sup>

Knowledge of God comes through experiencing Him in a transformative way. The measure of one's knowledge of God is not solely found in the amount of information one has, rather it is demonstrated in the way one lives out his or her life for God.<sup>18</sup> As Packer

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<sup>15</sup> This agrees with modern educational principles which indicate that at higher levels of learning there is a deeper understanding of the subject. See David R. Krathwohl, “A Revision of Bloom's Taxonomy: An Overview,” *Theory into Practice* 41, no. 4 (Autumn 2002): 212-218.

<sup>16</sup> Gilchrest, “yada,” 367.

<sup>17</sup> Gilchrest, “yada,” 367.

<sup>18</sup> Jackie David Johns and Cheryl Bridges Johns. “Yielding to the Spirit: A Pentecostal Approach to Group Bible Study.” *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* (1992), 111-13.

and Parrott iterate, “it is not knowledge as abstraction that is sought through faith training. It is, rather, that God’s people will actually *walk in the way* of the LORD.”<sup>19</sup>

Is a properly designed catechism the way to develop this culture of deeper understanding and call to response? To answer this question, it is important to explore some biblical evidence that relates to catechesis. Specifically, this paper will explore three sets of biblical data used in determining the theology of catechesis. The first set of biblical data is found in Deuteronomy 6:4-9 which sets the foundation for catechetical youth discipleship. The second set is made up of Psalm 78:1-8, Proverbs 22:6, and Ephesians 6:1-4 which highlights the training of youth. The final set is comprised of the eight New Testament uses of the word *katēcheō* from which the term catechesis is derived.<sup>20</sup>

### **The *Shema* – Deut 6:4-9**

Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one! You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand and they shall be as frontals on your forehead. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

This crucial text gives foundational principles on which to build a catechetical discipleship in youth ministry. This passage of scripture is significant and many consider it the heart of the law of God. It is called the *shema* from the Hebrew word “hear” and

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<sup>19</sup> J. I. Packer and Gary A. Parrett. *Grounded in the Gospel: Building Believers the Old-Fashioned Way*. (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2010), 37.

<sup>20</sup> There are many more passage of scripture that could be used to build a theological foundation for catechetical youth discipleship; however, for the sake of space and because these specific passages are consistent with scripture in training young people in the word of God these passages have been chosen.

when Jesus was queried about the greatest Jewish law, this was what He repeated back as His answer (Matt 22:34-40; Mark 12:28-31). This passage is significant today as practicing Jews still recite it at least twice daily.<sup>21</sup> The *shema* is more than the memorization of God's word; it is the commands of God continually imprinted on the heart of man.<sup>22</sup> These verses illustrate how the law is relational and for one to love God he or she must exhibit it through obedience. Yet obedience must be based on the love one has for God. Children are taught these commands so that they can love God.<sup>23</sup>

This foundational passage begins with action. Moses is teaching the Israelites the commandments of God in order that they would practice them. These commands are not merely propositions one must give intellectual assent to, they demand more; they are a way of life. God is expecting that His followers will operate their lives out of his commands and will repetitiously and consistently live out His statutes and judgments; that His revelation will permeate everyday life, from morning until evening. He is expecting that these commands will be passed down from one generation to the next. Catechetical discipleship must be founded upon this concept and must be taught in such a way that provides opportunity to consistently and repetitiously live out what is being communicated. The ultimate goal of this religious instruction is that the commands of God would be written on the believer's heart, which in turn results in obedience: it is obedience motivated by love (Deut 10:8; Ps 40:6-8; Hos 6:6; Matt 9:10-13). It is not the

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<sup>21</sup> Eugene H. Merrill, *Deuteronomy*, The New American Commentary, vol. 4 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1994), 163.

<sup>22</sup> Samuel R. Driver, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Deuteronomy*, 3rd ed. (Edinburgh: T & T Clark Ltd, 1978), 92.

<sup>23</sup> U. Rüterswörden, "sama'," in *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, eds. G. Johannes Botterweck, Helmer Ringgren, & Heinz-Josef Fabry, trans. David E. Green, vol. 15 (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2006).

actions themselves that God is seeking, but the obedience to his commands. He desires that His followers love Him so much that His commands are as much a part of their character as they are of His character. To understand this more fully it is necessary to examine four aspects of discipleship that the *shema* reveals, which can inform catechesis: the destination, the goal, the student, and the method.

### The Destination (The Heart)

The first aspect of discipleship that is revealed in the *shema* is that the heart is the destination of God's word (v.6). The concept of the "heart" in the Hebrew language is the inner man, mind, will, or the soul of the person. It is the center of the intellect and rational side of humankind,<sup>24</sup> the place where eternal truth can abide. That the commands of God would be imprinted on the heart of man (Jer 31:33) is at the core of discipleship and catechesis. The heart affects the entire person and whatever the heart contains will be expressed through the mouth (Matt 12:36). For truth to reach the heart of the student it must originate from the heart of the teacher and must be diligently taught "for mere words secure only a mere recollection."<sup>25</sup> Thus, the catechism that is taught must be in the heart of the teacher first in order to reach the heart of the children who will receive it.

### The Goal (Obedience)

The second aspect of discipleship that is discovered in the *shema* is the belief that for something to be imprinted upon one's heart indicates that action is not far behind. The

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<sup>24</sup> Merrill, *Deuteronomy*, 167.

<sup>25</sup> John Peter Lange, Philip Schaff and Wilhelm Julius Schröeder, *Deuteronomy, A Commentary on the Holy Scriptures* (Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, 2008), 95.

word “hear” in verse four signifies more than just the act of hearing; in Hebrew it is often synonymous with obedience, especially in a covenant. Essentially for the Israelites—and Christians by extension of the cross—to disregard God when they hear Him would be equal to not hearing Him at all.<sup>26</sup> The book of Deuteronomy is about covenant renewal based upon obedience; an obedience that stemmed as “a response of love to the God who had brought [His] people out of Egypt and was leading them into the Promised Land.”<sup>27</sup> The commands were to be written on the heart of the people, meaning that “the people were to think on them and meditate about them, so that obedience would not be a matter of formal legalism, but a response based upon understanding.”<sup>28</sup> The command to love the LORD God is central to the book of Deuteronomy and when Israel is commanded to love God, this was not an emotional feeling that caused one to obey (though it did not exclude emotional love), rather it was a love of obligation or duty. This love was “a duty which follows naturally as the grateful response to Jehovah for the many underserved mercies received at His hands.”<sup>29</sup> It is because God is Creator and Redeemer that He rightly demands obedience from His people.<sup>30</sup> Israel is to love God and obey all of His commands, not because they necessarily feel like it, or because it feels right, but simply because God is who He is<sup>31</sup> and He requires it. “The all-encompassing love for God was to find its expression in a willing and joyful obedience of the commandments of God.”<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Merrill, *Deuteronomy*, 162.

<sup>27</sup> P. C. Craigie, *The Book of Deuteronomy*. The New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1976), 169-70.

<sup>28</sup> Craigie, *Deuteronomy*, 170.

<sup>29</sup> Driver, *Deuteronomy*, 91.

<sup>30</sup> Driver, *Deuteronomy*, 164.

<sup>31</sup> A paraphrase of Gen 3:14 “I AM WHO I AM”

<sup>32</sup> Craigie, *Deuteronomy*, 170.

The same must be true with any catechism. It is a call to obey the word of God. The *shema* gives God's people an understanding that they must respond to the doctrine of God with appropriate obedience and action<sup>33</sup> and Christian catechesis must also give people an understanding that they are to act upon the word of God.

### The Student (Children)

The third aspect of discipleship found in the *shema* is Moses' reminder that the target audience or students of religious education were the next generation. It was expected that the commands of God were "to be known by every adult member of the community, and they [were] to be taught diligently to their children. Nothing [was] more important to the future of God's people than the communication of 'these words.'"<sup>34</sup> It is through adults that religious beliefs are passed down from one generation to another; Israel is no exception. God understands that for His people to remain faithful to Him, adults must understand His word and have it written on their own hearts. This word must then be passed onto their children to ensure its continuation from generation to generation. A regular routine of instruction enables a father to educate his son and the son in turn to educate the grandson and so on. This would assure that the truths and traits of the covenant would not be forgotten.<sup>35</sup>

Many would argue that the book of Deuteronomy has a pedagogical purpose and that the *shema* which commands the diligent teaching of God's commands within the

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<sup>33</sup> Walter A. Elwell and Barry J. Beitzel, *Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1988), 1945.

<sup>34</sup> Duane L. Christensen, *Deuteronomy 1-11*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 6a (Dallas: Word Books Publisher, 1991), 143.

<sup>35</sup> Merrill, *Deuteronomy*, 166-67.

family context at all times and in all places, illustrates this pedagogical purpose. This passage demonstrates that the content of Deuteronomy was the primary curriculum for the covenant renewal<sup>36</sup> of the next generation. The binding of God's commands on their hands and foreheads and the writing of them on the doorposts of their houses and gates were pedagogical tools<sup>37</sup> used to teach the children and constantly remind each member of the community of God's commands.<sup>38</sup>

### The Method (Consistent Repetition)

The final aspect of discipleship discerned from the *shema* is method. The *shema*, as the heart of God's message, is quite significant in the religious training and the passing down of the Jewish faith and therefore, it would be prudent to take heed of the teaching method that God prescribes for this significant truth. The key in this passage is that repetitious teaching instills learning in the inner man. The term that is translated as "diligently" is derived from the Hebrew word *sanan* (to engrave by incessant recitation and explanation).<sup>39</sup> Kellerman argues that the important theological statement in Deut 6:4 is to be learned "in the typical manner of the ancient Near East: the teacher pronounces the text and the learners repeat it; this goes on until it is firmly fixed in memory. It is quoted always and everywhere. Thus the younger generation is socialized by meditating together with their elders on the texts of their faith."<sup>40</sup> This illustrates the need for the most basic

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<sup>36</sup> See K.A. Kitchen, *Ancient Orient and Old Testament* (Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press, 1975) for seeing Deuteronomy as the context for covenant renewal.

<sup>37</sup> The idea of understanding and using relevant pedagogical tools will be examined later with Prov 6:22.

<sup>38</sup> Christensen, *Deuteronomy 1-11*, 145.

<sup>39</sup> D. Kellermann and H. Ringgren. "sanan," in *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, eds. G. Johannes Botterweck, Helmer Ringgren, & Heinz-Josef Fabry, trans. David E. Green, vol. 15 (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2006), 343.

<sup>40</sup> Kellermann and Ringgren, "sanan," 344.

level of learning in discipleship, which catechism is most noted for: memorization. This is simply the beginning since rote learning is only a starting point; gaining knowledge also implies an understanding which leads to action.

A foundational thought for discipleship that is crucial for catechesis is found in vv. 7-9. Moses is illustrating the importance of repetitious teaching in order for the commands to become part of the inner man. He shares three tactics to use this method of consistent repetition in daily life.

The first tactic of teaching is found in v.7 “and you shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up.” This verse should be viewed as a general Jewish phrase which indicates the entirety of something.<sup>41</sup> The opposing terms indicate an all-encompassing idea. The terms of sitting (inactive) and walking (active) indicate a totality of human effort and the terms of lying down (to sleep at night) and rising up (to wake in the morning) indicate the totality of time. This signifies that God’s truth is so important that it should encompass the entirety of a person’s existence, “it must be at the very center of all one’s labor and life.”<sup>42</sup>

Kenda Dean argues that teenagers today are not necessarily unable to express their faith in deep theological terms; they simply do not have opportunity to engage in robust theological conversation that would encourage and enhance their theology. She contends that by giving teenagers a place to express their faith will result in teens that are

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<sup>41</sup> A.D. Mayes, *Deuteronomy*, The New Century Bible Commentary (Grand Rapids: WM. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1979), 177.

<sup>42</sup> Merrill, *Deuteronomy*, 167.

more likely able to better articulate, critically examine, and confess their faith.<sup>43</sup>

Deuteronomy gives the family and church an important reminder to be that place. To be a place where the word of God is taught consistently and repetitiously throughout all of life and to be a place where teens have the opportunity to articulate their express their faith through word and deed.

The second tactic of teaching brought out in the *shema* is the making of signs: “and you shall bind them as a sign on your hand and they shall be as frontals on your forehead” (v.8). Humanity’s knowledge of the world has come through a constant stream of unique experiences. To better understand and make sense of these experiences humanity has developed a limited number of categories and put a number of experiences into one category. For example, there are many different types of trees, flowers, insects, but society has created words to define large categories into which they fit.<sup>44</sup> The Church has done the same, using words such as soteriology, ecclesiology, and atonement, as examples. Not only do we use language to make sense of these experiences, we also develop and use other signs (i.e. facial expressions, drawings, sounds, icons) to represent an abstract concept of reality which allows us to experience and communicate in the world in which we live.<sup>45</sup> This is precisely what Moses is telling the Israelites to do. Creating and applying these signs is a way of educating their children and helping them experience God. The two signs of binding the commands of God to one’s hands and placing them between one’s eyes are a constant reminder, for the Israelites, of who God is and their call to obediently love Him. The signs for Israel were to always be before

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<sup>43</sup> Kenda Creasy Dean, *Almost Christian: What the Faith of our Teenagers is Telling the American Church* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 137-8.

<sup>44</sup> Paul G. Hiebert, *Transforming Worldviews* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 81.

<sup>45</sup> Hiebert, *Transforming Worldviews*, 81.

them so that they would unwaveringly observe them.<sup>46</sup> This concept needs to be translated into the language and cultural products that would work today. A real-life example of this would be a daily reminder app on a smart phone, or sticky notes on a school binder which would be with the student throughout the day. Teenagers need to be exposed on a consistent basis to the signs that remind them of what they are learning.

The third tactic of teaching that highlights the need for repetition is found in v. 9 where Moses instructs the Israelites to write the commands of God on the doorposts of their houses and gates. These written commands were strategically placed in order to provide daily reminders for the Israelites. They would be reminded of God's commands when they left their home and again when they returned. Their friends and neighbors would also be reminded whenever they would come and visit or walk past the gate. For pre-teens today, this would mean that the catechism is not simply written down in a notebook and then promptly forgotten about. A pedagogical tool would be needed that would allow the written catechism to be strategically placed before pre-teens so they are constantly reminded of it as they go about their day.

### **Faith Training**

The first set of biblical data focused on the foundation of catechetical youth discipleship. The second set focuses on aspects of training young people in the faith that are relevant to catechetical youth discipleship. This next section will focus on three separate, yet complementary, scriptures that highlight some important aspects of faith training. The first scripture, Psalm 78:1-8 emphasizes the importance of passing down the testimony of

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<sup>46</sup> H. D. M. Spence-Jones, *Deuteronomy*, The Pulpit Commentary (London; New York: Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1909), 119.

God from one generation to the next. The second scripture, Proverbs 22:6 explores the importance of training in a way that young people will understand, learn from, and follow. The final scripture, Ephesians 6:1-4 highlights the importance of fathers and families in the catechetical discipleship process.

#### From One Generation to the Next (Ps 78:1-8)

Give ear, O my people, to my teaching; incline your ears to the words of my mouth! I will open my mouth in a parable; I will utter dark sayings from of old, things that we have heard and known, that our fathers have told us. We will not hide them from their children, but tell to the coming generation the glorious deeds of the LORD, and his might, and the wonders that he has done. He established a testimony in Jacob and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers to teach to their children, that the next generation might know them, the children yet unborn, and arise and tell them to their children, so that they should set their hope in God and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments; ant that they should not be like their fathers, a stubborn and rebellious generation, a generation whose heart was not steadfast, whose spirit was not faithful to God.

As noted above, Christian learning is about partnership with community in the spiritual development of young people. This means that the Christian community as a whole and the local Church in particular hold some responsibility for the spiritual development of the young people in their church. In Psalm 78 the psalmist reminds Israel that God has established a testimony of His faithfulness in the lives of their ancestors. Goldingay argues that Psalm 78 was designed as a regular liturgical piece in order to remind Israel of the dangers of rebellion and disobedience and “the opening exhortation in vv. 1-8 stands out from the whole as a statement of the psalm’s purpose.”<sup>47</sup> The purpose is didactic in nature since Psalm 78 is not a traditional psalm in that it does not address God,

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<sup>47</sup> John Goldingay, *Psalms 42-89*, Baker Commentary on the Old Testament Wisdom and Psalms, vol. 2 (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007), 480.

but the people or congregation instead, which gives it a didactic quality.<sup>48</sup> It is “an inspired historical instruction covering Israel’s history from Egypt to David, rehearsing His wonderful works of power, the display of God’s own character, and their own sinful character and miserable failure.”<sup>49</sup> The psalmist uses the ancient history of Israel as lessons of truth for the contemporary people of Israel.<sup>50</sup>

This psalm “is dominated by narrative accounts of aspects of God’s relationship with Israel from Egypt through to the time of David.”<sup>51</sup> It uses narrative to teach an embodied catechism; a shorter narrative that points to a larger narrative (Gen – 2 Sam). It is God’s will that these stories of old be passed down from one generation to the next, from father to child so that His testimony would remain until the end of humanity.<sup>52</sup>

These truths which Israel has been taught by their ancestors must also be passed down to the children so that they will praise God (v. 4), have confidence in him (v. 7,) and not become stubborn and rebellious (v. 8). According to Goldingay this is a three step process, “first, the ancestors tell their story (and the story they have received)...Second, their descendants listen to this story rather than ignoring the outdated old fogies. Third, they acknowledge its truth, heed it, and respond to it.”<sup>53</sup> Psalm 78 is a teaching psalm; it connects knowing with doing. Israel is to hear and know these stories so that they will live a certain way. It is not merely about memorizing the history of Israel; there is a practical element to this knowledge.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> Goldingay, *Psalms*, 479.

<sup>49</sup> Arno C. Gaebelin, *The Psalms: An Exposition* (Neptune, New Jersey: Loizeaux Brothers, 1939), 304.

<sup>50</sup> Charles A. Briggs, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Psalms*, The International critical Commentary, vol. 2 (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1907), 178.

<sup>51</sup> Goldingay, *Psalms*, 479.

<sup>52</sup> John Calvin and James Anderson, *Commentary on the Book of Psalms*, vol. 3 (Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, 2010), 230.

<sup>53</sup> Goldingay, *Psalms*, 485

<sup>54</sup> H. C. Leupold, *Exposition of the Psalms* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1961), 564.

Throughout history the younger generation has relied on the older generation for knowledge. To gain knowledge one would go to school to learn from a teacher who held higher knowledge, or one would learn at home from his or her parents. As time has passed, however, and technology has advanced—from books, to computers, to the internet—more knowledge is available to children today than ever before. Children are no longer dependent solely on adults for knowledge. Knowledge, however, is only part of the equation. What does knowledge mean without wisdom of how to apply it? Psalm 78 is more than stories for a younger generation to memorize; it is full of principles and lessons embodied in the relationship between God and His people. The older generation today should be encouraged to pass down wisdom in stories of the works that God has done for them. The older generation is responsible for passing down their faith and knowledge in a way that not only reflects what is known but also that which is acted upon.<sup>55</sup>

The older generation is not the only era with the weight of responsibility in catechesis. The present generation is the link between the older generation and the one that is emerging. Without this attachment, the chain of faith will be broken.<sup>56</sup> Packer and Parrett illustrate this possible break by turning the Christian's attention to Judges 2 which adeptly shows the Church a foreshadow of what is possible if each generation does not tightly grasp onto their responsibility for faith training: "And there arose another generation after them who did not know the LORD, nor yet the work which He had done for Israel. Then the sons of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD, and served the Baals, and they forsook the LORD, the God of their fathers, who had brought them out of the

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<sup>55</sup> Goldingay, *Psalms*, 486.

<sup>56</sup> Goldingay, *Psalms*, 485.

land of Egypt” (Judg 2:10-12). They did not know the LORD, nor did they know His works.<sup>57</sup> This passage clearly illustrates that Israel had failed to pass on the faith from one generation to the next as God had commanded in Deuteronomy 6:4-9 and Psalm 78:1-9.

This psalm is comprised of “the lessons of history that faithful parents should teach their children.”<sup>58</sup> This compilation of stories reveal how God had been faithful in the past and proclaimed the character of God and illustrated how He interacted with His people. The psalmist “lays stress chiefly on the fact that the basic lessons involved are to be taught diligently to their children by the fathers lest coming generations continue to make the same mistakes in a wearying and endless round.”<sup>59</sup> This is akin to a father telling a son, “I am teaching you this so you won’t make the same mistakes that I did.” In modern day North America, however, it is not always viable for a parent to be available or willing to bear this responsibility. Thus it may be necessary for men and women in the Church to step in and fill this role especially in the case of young Christians who do not have Christian parents or whose parents are not able to be involved in their child’s spiritual discipleship process. This psalm signifies the importance of intergenerational testimony in the Church for the benefit of the children and youth. It illustrates both the negative (rebellion and disobedience) and the positive (bliss of David’s kingship) attributes of Israel’s history because “the history of redemption is revelatory. The Lord’s mighty acts reveal his love, mercy, and patience with his people.”<sup>60</sup> Catechetical youth discipleship must take this into consideration. If this psalm were brought into today’s

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<sup>57</sup> Packer and Parret, *Grounded*, 36-7.

<sup>58</sup> Leupold, *Exposition*, 561.

<sup>59</sup> Leupold, *Exposition*, 564.

<sup>60</sup> William A. VanGemeren, “Psalms,” in *Psalms – Song of Songs*, The Expositor’s Bible Commentary, vol. 5 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1991), 504-505.

context the Church would follow verses 1-8 and substitute their own history (of the global Church, local Church, family) for Israel's, thus God's word would be passed down from generation to generation. It is an unfair expectation that youth pastors would be able to teach all of the Church's youth on their own. In order to make the catechism truly meaningful, one-on-one discipleship and mentoring is needed. It is meant for the Church to pass along its faith, tradition, experiences to the next generation so that they will praise God, have confidence in him and remain faithful all their lives.

### Train Up a Child (Prov 22.6)

Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it.

The book of Proverbs is a compilation of wisdom that "presents a model of a godly home in which the father faithfully instructs his children. The ten introductory discourses are addressed to a son (1:8; 2:1; 3:1; 4:1, 10, 20; 5:1; 6:1, 20; 7:1), appealing for him to commit his life to seeking wisdom."<sup>61</sup> As mentioned above the way that society is structured today means that there may be teenagers who come from homes where the father or mother is absent physically, emotionally, or both. It may be that a teen comes from a non-believing home where the parents have no interest in or might even oppose their child's spiritual development. When this is the case, this verse still applies to the Church and the spiritual community that is charged by God to raise up young men and women to seek God's wisdom.

Proverbs 22:6 specifically says, "Train up a child in the way he should go, even when he is old he will not depart from it." This is not a prescription for how life will

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<sup>61</sup> Jim Newheiser, *Opening Up Proverbs* (Leominster: Day One Publications, 2008), 153-54.

invariably turn out. It is not a formula for parents to say, “If I tell my children about God and teach them all the right things then they will always follow Jesus.” This proverb is not meant to be a guilt producer for parents whose children have rebelled<sup>62</sup> (fallen under negative influences) nor a pride builder for parents whose children have turned out well. Longman points out that this is not an eternal promise from God that if parents raise their children right they will never doubt;<sup>63</sup> it is a word of advice meant to guide parents to their proper duty of raising their children to follow God’s path. It is stating an accurate principle that good training usually produces positive results<sup>64</sup> and it is more likely that a child will become a responsible adult with it.<sup>65</sup> Packer and Parrett state it well: “Even with our best efforts to teach our children God’s mighty deeds and righteous commands, we have no guarantee that they will grow up to truly know the Lord. But if we fail to teach what we have known and seen of God’s ways, we will be without excuse when God calls us to account for how we raised our children.”<sup>66</sup>

### *Child*

There is a considerable span of age for the noun “child” (*na’ar*) from birth to age thirty.<sup>67</sup> Hildebrandt insists the term *na’ar* “was a term of status, rather than merely of youthfulness.”<sup>68</sup> Thus this verse is clearly not to be used as biblical support for early childhood training “since the proverbial *na’ar* was surely an adolescent/young adult. He

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<sup>62</sup> Paul E. Koptak, *Proverbs, The NIV Application Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003), 517.

<sup>63</sup> Tremper Longman III, *Proverbs*, Baker Commentary on the Old Testament Wisdom and Psalms (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2006), 405.

<sup>64</sup> David A. Hubbard, *Proverbs*, The Communicator’s Commentary, vol. 15a (Dallas: Word Books Publisher, 1989), 304.

<sup>65</sup> Longman III, *Proverbs*, 405.

<sup>66</sup> Packer and Parrett, *Grounded*, 37.

<sup>67</sup> Longman III, *Proverbs*, 405.

<sup>68</sup> Ted Hildebrandt, “Proverbs 22:6a: Train up a Child,” *Grace Theological Journal* 9, no. 1 (1988): 13.

was a royal squire who was in the process of being apprenticed in wisdom for taking on royal responsibilities consistent with his status as a *na'ar*.<sup>69</sup> Others, however, argue that to ensure greatest success, religious education of a child should begin as early as possible.<sup>70</sup>

### *Train*

Ross argues that the idea behind the verb “to train” is better expressed as training with purpose.<sup>71</sup> Hildebrandt points out that most scholars agree with this purposeful training and suggest that it means “the careful nurturing, instructing and discipling of the child in an attempt to inculcate a wise and moral character.”<sup>72</sup> However, He himself does not agree with this idea and maintains that the term is better understood as specifically referencing an inauguration process “with the bestowal of status and responsibility as a consequence of having completed an initiation process. In short, the word focuses not so much on the process of training as on the resultant *responsibility* and *status* of the one initiated.”<sup>73</sup> To better understand this process in relation to religious instruction one must examine the term “way.”

### *Way*

There is considerable debate on the meaning of this passage and therefore calls on some consideration in order to best ascertain how it relates and helps a youth catechism.

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<sup>69</sup> Hildebrandt, “Proverbs 22:6a,” 14.

<sup>70</sup> Duane A. Garrett, *Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs*, The New American Commentary, vol. 15 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1993), 187-88.

<sup>71</sup> Allen P. Ross, “Proverbs,” in *Psalms – Song of Songs*, The Expositor’s Bible Commentary, vol. 5, 881-1134 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1991), 1061.

<sup>72</sup> Hildebrandt, “Proverbs 22:6a,” 5.

<sup>73</sup> Hildebrandt, “Proverbs 22:6a,” 9.

Koptak has identified four interpretations of this passage. The moral view which indicates the good and true way a child should go. The vocational view which is the position a young man or woman would take as they enter society. The personal aptitude view which takes into account the learner's capacities when it comes to spiritual education. Finally, the personal demands view which is more of a warning than admonition that argues a spoiled child will never change.<sup>74</sup>

### Moral Path

According to Herbert, the Hebrew noun for "way" (*derek*) "often refers to the actions and behavior of men, who either follow the way of the righteous or the way of the wicked. The way of the righteous is closely linked with 'the way of the Lord.'"<sup>75</sup> Ross acknowledges the different interpretations of "way" and offers that it means the path an individual will take whether it be good or evil.<sup>76</sup> Troy claims that "way" does not mean in the right way or according to their development; rather he argues that a child is to be trained in light of his/her destined path; "the implication being that the manner of life will not be morally bad."<sup>77</sup> Hubbard agrees that the training is not meant to convert the child, but "to initiate and continue a pattern of correction that will curb the heart's perversity and free the youngster to grow up and even to grow 'old' without turning aside ('depart') from the 'way.'" The pattern of obedience and righteousness required for effective participation in human society."<sup>78</sup> Thus the two views are brought together in that a child

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<sup>74</sup> Koptak, *Proverbs*, 517.

<sup>75</sup> Wolf Herbert, "darak," in *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, ed., R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer, Jr. and Bruce K. Waltke, vol. 1 (Chicago: Moody Press, 1980), 197.

<sup>76</sup> Ross, *Proverbs*, 1061.

<sup>77</sup> C. H. Toy, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Proverbs*, The International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1899), 415.

<sup>78</sup> Hubbard, *Proverbs*, 304.

must be trained as to how to become a part of society and the Christian child must be trained to be a part of the Christian community. Catechesis is a significant part of this training. In line with the rest of the book of proverbs, however, it makes sense to understand *derek* as talking about the one path, the right way, God's way of wisdom as opposed to the way of folly.<sup>79</sup>

### Vocational Path

Koptak asserts that "the proverb speaks not so much of early childhood rearing as of the initiation to adulthood and the teaching of its expectations and responsibilities."<sup>80</sup>

Training a young person in "the way" is about training them for the role they are going to play in society; preparing them to play their part. This is the view that Hildebrandt would support, though his view varies slightly. He argues that this verse relates to recognition of a young squire's status and his initiation into official responsibilities with the respect due his status. His training is to reflect the role he is to play and pertain to the status that he holds.<sup>81</sup> This view holds implications for youth catechetical discipleship. First the pre-teen should be shown respect for the initiation they are being prepared for (e.g, inclusion or full membership into the body of Christ following baptism or confirmation). Second if pre-teens are expected to be full members of the Church then they should be given the respect and training that would match this (i.e. a deep thinking catechism).

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<sup>79</sup> Longman III, *Proverbs*, 405.

<sup>80</sup> Koptak, *Proverbs*, 518.

<sup>81</sup> Hildebrandt, "Proverbs 22:6a," 17-18.

### The Personal Aptitude View

A third understanding of *derek* is that parents must be aware of their child's "developing capacities, interests, and inclinations and must tailor the training process to enhance his unique abilities."<sup>82</sup> Though it is quite possible for *derek* to mean that, there is some opposition to it. McKane argues against the notion of "according to his way" to mean "according to his aptitudes." He believes it is intended as "according to the way he ought to go," Thus the process of teaching is not to be tailored to the individual requirements of the learner. He posits that there is only one way to teach or learn and that is the way of life.<sup>83</sup> Longman also does not believe that this proverb is indicating that "children are to be raised according to their natural tendencies."<sup>84</sup> This opposition of the personal aptitude view is not compelling and it is possible that the author meant all three interpretations.

### Personal Demands View

The final and least popular interpretation of this passage is the personal demands view. One supporter of this view, Clifford, believes that the best understanding of "way" is to "take the command as ironic...let a boy do what he wants and he will become a self-willed adult incapable of change."<sup>85</sup> Hildebrandt summarizes this view as "saying that if you rear a child by acquiescing to his desires and demands, when he is old you will never break him of it."<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> Hildebrandt, "Proverbs 22:6a," 15.

<sup>83</sup> William McKane, *Proverbs: A New Approach*, The Old Testament Library (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1977), 564.

<sup>84</sup> Longman III, *Proverbs*, 503.

<sup>85</sup> Richard J. Clifford, *Proverbs: A Commentary*, The Old Testament Library (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1999), 197.

<sup>86</sup> Hildebrandt, "Proverbs 22:6a," 15.

### *Conclusion*

All of these views have merit and in light of the context of Proverbs not being timeless truths, all of these views are viable depending the context of the student: 1) the young person who needs teaching on the correct path to take in life; 2) the young person who is being prepared for their place, not only in society but also in the Church; 3) the young person learns best when being taught according to his or her learning styles; and even 4) a warning that if allow our young people to be lazy and apathetic about their faith this will translate to a lazy and apathetic faith as an adult.

This project supports all four of these meanings. First, youth catechesis is about showing young people the path of God. As their mentor, it is about being a guide for young people to know the lifestyle that God has called them to as a Christian. Second, youth catechesis must be aware of the manner in which young people learn today. This can be from the tools one uses (i.e. iPad, pen and paper, internet, video) to the methodology utilized for teaching (i.e. lecture, problem-based learning). Third, youth catechesis should understand that catechesis is preparing a young people to become members of the Church. It is not meant to be a simple discipleship tool for youth groups, but part of the whole life discipleship process that church members journey through. Fourth, youth catechesis recognizes that if the Church is not intentional about helping young people build skills and habits in faith development then natural tendencies will take over. For example, it is more difficult and takes greater discipline to consistently read scripture than not.

## Fathers and Families (Eph 6.1-4)

Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. “Honor your father and mother” (this is the first commandment with a promise), “that it might go well with you and that you may live long in the land.” Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

If discipleship was intended to be in the context of the family (as seen in Deuteronomy) there should also be some kind of guideline for it. Ephesians 6:1-4 gives us a foundational understanding that “growing up in a Christian home is intended to be a very positive experience for both parent and child when each plays his or her proper role.”<sup>87</sup> There are two parts to this familial relationship just as there are two parts to the catechetical relationship. First, is the relationship of the children to the parents and second is the relationship of the parents, particularly fathers, to the children. Children are to obey their parents in the Lord, while fathers (and mothers) are to bring children up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. Though it is important for children to respect and honor both of their parents, it is also important that parents understand their role in the life of their child. It is an incredible responsibility that God has given to parents and in light of catechesis and youth ministry, parents play a large part in the spiritual development of their teens. To gain a deeper understanding of this responsibility, one can look to Ephesians 6:1-4 and in particular verse 4, “And, fathers, do not provoke your children to anger; but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.”

The term discipline can also be rendered as training and indicates that there should be intentional consistent training when it comes to the spiritual instruction of the Lord. To discipline one’s self there must be consistency and dedication in practice. The

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<sup>87</sup> Max Anders, *Galatians-Colossians*, Holman New Testament Commentary, vol. 8, (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1999), 189.

term instruction in this context can also mean admonition which could be a mild rebuke or advice for or against doing something. Fathers are to admonish or instruct in the context of discipline. Fathers need to intentionally teach young men and women to develop the discipline of training in the faith. This is at the heart of catechetical youth discipleship. The Church must respond to teens by fathers in the Church taking on the role of discipline and instruction, first to their children and second to children without fathers.

In his commentary on Ephesians Lloyd-Jones states: “People pay large sums of money, spend a good deal of time, and give much thought to the bringing up and rearing of an animal that it may become a prize-winner in a show. But sometimes one is given the impression that very little time and care, attention and thought, are given to the rearing of children.”<sup>88</sup> Those who choose to spend time and money on raising animals or anything else for that matter tend to do it because they have an interest and passion in it. In addition, a mistake will only result in lost money. Raising a child, though, is not always a choice nor is it always a passion or desire for some people. Yet even so, they find themselves as reluctant parents. In contrast, there are many people in the world who would not choose to raise a prize-winning animal, just as there are people who will choose not to raise God fearing children. Parenting takes time, money, and is tough but the reward far outweighs the difficult task and is why the intentional training up of children is imperative.

Lloyd-Jones argues that this passage indicates where Christian parents differ in their child-rearing than non-Christians. Like all parents, Christian parents are to raise

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<sup>88</sup> D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, *Life in the Spirit in Marriage, Home and Work* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1974), 290.

their children with good morals and civility, however they must also be intentional about bringing them in the “discipline and instruction of the Lord.” He gives some practical advice on how to raise kids in the “instruction of the Lord.” First, he contends that parents need to display the truth of God in their example. This is akin to putting the word of God on their wrists and foreheads. Second, parents are to teach through general conversation. Wherever one is, it is important to be aware of what is happening around in life and use conversation to bring the moment back to Christ. Third, parents should answer questions like, “Dad why do we go to church?”, “Mom why do other people say hurtful things?” in a way that turns the child back to the gospel.<sup>89</sup> This is a catechetical approach.

This passage gives a hint of a methodology of faith training. For example, when a child is misbehaving at the table (e.g. chewing food with his mouth open) a parent will readily correct that child and remind him or her it is rude to chew with one’s mouth open. This scenario is played out over numerous times until the child finally internalizes the learning and the good habit is formed (chewing with his or her mouth closed). This can be paralleled in spiritual lessons at the dinner table. For example, a child who often begins eating before the family sits down and ask for God’s blessing over their meal can be reminded that it is important to wait for everyone to be seated and then pray together. This can be augmented with a short explanation of why the family prays before they eat (e.g. God is our provider and we want to take a moment to thank Him and remind ourselves that He is the one who provides for us).

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<sup>89</sup> Lloyd-Jones, *Life in the Spirit*, 289-302.

This intentional training is also evident in the phrase “bring them up.” Snodgrass argues that this term “does not do justice to the notion of care expressed by the verb, particularly since Paul’s previous use of the verb in Ephesians 5:29 (NIV ‘feeds’) conveys the idea of ‘nurture’.”<sup>90</sup> In the NASB Ephesians 5:29 is translated as “nourishes” which indicates an intentional feeding to make healthy. This word was originally used in regards to physical nourishment and later came to be known for the nurture of body, soul, and mind.<sup>91</sup> When a mother provides nourishment for her young, she does not feed her child random items. She is intentional about providing the right kind of sustenance; this includes breast milk from day one to ensuring that her child eats the proper amount of healthy nutrition as her child ages. This is not some thoughtless act of feeding, rather it is purposeful nourishment that will result in a healthy physical child. When parents are commanded to “bring up” or “nourish” their children spiritually, the same principle applies.

This passage is reminiscent of Deuteronomy 6:4-9, Ps 78:1-9, and Proverbs 22:6 in that there is a clear connection between all four. The intentional passing down of spiritual truth and training up young people to know, follow, and love God is of paramount importance for parents and the Church today.

### **Katēcheō**

The Greek word *katēcheō*, which the English term *catechesis* is derived from, is used in the New Testament on eight occasions (Luke 1:4; Acts 18:24; Acts 21:21, 24; Rom 2:18;

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<sup>90</sup> Klyne Snodgrass, *Ephesians*, The NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 322.

<sup>91</sup> Francis Foulkes, *The Letter of Paul to the Ephesians: An Introduction and Commentary*, rev. ed., Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1989), 172.

1 Cor 14:19; Gal 6:6). *Katēcheō* is one of many words used for teaching in the New Testament.<sup>92</sup> For example, Paul used both *katēcheō* and *didasko* in his writings to describe Christian instruction. *Katēcheō* can be interpreted as “to tell about something,” as well as “to receive news of something.”<sup>93</sup> Paul used the term *katēcheō* exclusively to mean “to give instruction concerning the content of faith.”<sup>94</sup> Beyers argues that Paul used *katēcheō* to emphasize “the particular nature of instruction on the basis of the Gospel.”<sup>95</sup> It is possible that Paul used this word “to assume the exclusive sense of Christian instruction, and it finds an echo today in the word ‘catechism.’”<sup>96</sup>

Parrett and Packer note some of these meanings in their book *Grounded in the Gospel* (see Table 1). They also state that there does not seem to be one generic definition for catechesis and suggest that this may be a place to begin: “Catechesis is the Church’s ministry of grounding and growing God’s people in the Gospel and its implications for doctrine, devotion, duty, and delight.”<sup>97</sup> As Parrett and Packer point out, catechesis is not necessarily a term that is well received throughout the Church and the PAOC is no exception to this.<sup>98</sup> For the sake of this project the terms which have been defined in Figure 2 will be retained in light of four arguments which Parrett and Packer have set forth: 1) the term catechesis is biblically based; 2) the term connects the project to 2000 years of Church history; 3) the term connects the project to other Christian communities;

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<sup>92</sup> Packer and Parrett, *Grounded*, 27.

<sup>93</sup> Herman Wolfgang Beyer, “katecheo,” in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, ed. Gerhard Kittel, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley, vol. 3 (Grand Rapids: WM. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1965), 638.

<sup>94</sup> Beyer, “katecheo,” 638.

<sup>95</sup> Beyer, “katecheo,” 639.

<sup>96</sup> Beyer, “katecheo,” 639.

<sup>97</sup> Parrett and Parrett, *Grounded*, 29. This book will be explored in more detail in Chapter Three.

<sup>98</sup> See *Limitations and Parameters*, p.23

Table 1: Meanings of *katēcheō*. Taken from J. I. Packer and Gary Parrett, *Grounded in the Gospel: Building Believers the Old-Fashioned Way* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2010), 27-28.

Catechesis	A “catchall” word for this particular form of ministry; sometimes used to refer specifically to the <i>process</i>
Catechize	A verb referring to the <i>process</i> of teaching in this particular manner
Catechism	Sometimes a designation for the actual <i>content</i> in which persons are catechized; often used today to refer to content in some particular printed format; sometimes, another “catchall” word for this form of ministry
Catechist	The teacher; the one who catechizes others
Catechumen	The learner; the one being catechized
Catechumenate	The sometimes formal, sometimes not-so-formal school of the faith that emerged in many churches to prepare new believers for their baptism and for full participation in the Church’s life
Catechetical	An adjective with many possible applications; one use is in regard to the “catechetical schools” for Christian higher learning established in some cities, such as Alexandria, in the second and third centuries
Catechetics	The study of the art and science of catechesis (as <i>homiletics</i> refers to the study of preaching, and <i>liturgics</i> refers to the study of worship)

and 4) there is renewed interest in things of the past and this includes catechesis.<sup>99</sup> Paul and Luke both use the term four times each and while Luke uses both meanings of the term (“to inform”, “to instruct”) Paul uses it exclusively to mean the instruction of someone in the substance of Christian faith.<sup>100</sup> In order to build a proper catechetical discipleship model for youth ministry it is necessary to examine each of these passages.

### Luke’s usage of *katēcheō*

#### *Luke 1:4*

The context of Luke 1:4 is Luke’s introduction to Theophilus. In this introduction Luke presents the purpose of his gospel as the instruction of Theophilus to gain assurance of his faith: “So that you (Theophilus) might know the exact truth about the things you have been taught.” The meaning of *katēcheō* in this verse is dependent on whether or not Theophilus was a Christian. If he was not a follower of Jesus then Luke may have merely been informing Theophilus of the history of Christ (Luke) and the Church (Acts) in order to influence him to follow Christ. Linguistically it is possible for either interpretation of Theophilus’ salvation situation—Christian or non-Christian—to be true, and there is ongoing debate on the issue. Beyer argues that by examining the content of what is said, Luke is merely reporting to Theophilus that the stories he has heard about Jesus are true and can be trusted,<sup>101</sup> indicating that Theophilus is not yet a Christian.<sup>102</sup> This does not

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<sup>99</sup> Packer and Parrett, *Grounded*, 31.

<sup>100</sup> Verlyn D. Verbrugge, *New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, abr. ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000), 297.

<sup>101</sup> Beyer, “katecheo,” 640.

<sup>102</sup> Nolland also holds to the position that Theophilus is not a believer, but his arguments are not convincing. See John Nolland, *Luke 1:9-20*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 35a (Dallas: Word Books Publisher, 1989), 11.

necessarily confirm his implication especially if Luke is a contemporary and dear friend (Luke 4:11) of Paul. He would be under his influence and it would make more sense that Luke would intend the meaning that Paul uses which is “to give instruction concern the content of faith;”<sup>103</sup> implying that Theophilus was already a Christian. Also the idea of Theophilus needing further instruction in the faith is similar to that of Apollos in Acts 18:24-28 where Luke uses the term to specifically denote instruction in the way of the Lord. There is no doubt that Theophilus was somehow connected to the Christian community and had some understanding of Jesus whether or not he was considered a Christian.<sup>104</sup> Luke expected Theophilus to be familiar with the gospel traditions and at times he omitted parts of the gospel tradition assuming that Theophilus and the other gentile Christian readers would be able to fill in the missing sections with their previous knowledge of the gospel traditions. Luke also does not try to explain the difficult terms that would be foreign to a gentile non-believer.<sup>105</sup>

It is legitimate to presume that Theophilus was a Christian, though he had an insufficient grasp of the faith, thus the instruction which Theophilus had received may have been insufficient and Luke wanted to give him additional and more thorough knowledge<sup>106</sup> to strengthen his faith. Thus it is the view of this writer that the probable circumstance was that Theophilus was a Christian and Luke was using the term to further instruct Theophilus, to ground him in the faith, which means the main purpose of Luke’s

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<sup>103</sup> Beyer, “katecheo,” 638.

<sup>104</sup> Joel B. Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1999), 46.

<sup>105</sup> Robert H. Stein, *Luke*, The New American Commentary, vol. 24 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1992), 27.

<sup>106</sup> Alfred Plummer, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to St. Luke*, The International Critical Commentary, 5<sup>th</sup> ed. (Edinburgh: T&T Clark Ltd., 1977), 5.

gospel was not evangelistic,<sup>107</sup> but was a method to minister to and instruct a Christian audience. For God's word to be imprinted on the heart of Christian pre-teens, in order that they act in obedience toward him, they must first be secure and certain in their faith. Thus, strengthening the faith of pre-teens is an important aspect of catechetical youth discipleship.

The purpose of Luke's writing was so that Theophilus, and by extension other Christians, would ascertain the things of Christ that had been taught. This certainty is not a modern idea but a pre-modern idea that is found in early Christianity. Luke-Acts was written to allow Christians to gain certainty or security in their faith. To understand this idea of certainty, it is important to move past the modern idea of certainty of faith which comes from abstract doctrinal truths, and set anchor to a pre-modern idea of certainty which came from oral truths passed down from generation to generation.<sup>108</sup> This certainty comes from viewed life experience and happens when older saints in the Church are able to share with pre-teens how God has been faithful in fulfilling His word in their lives. It allows pre-teens to see in real life, the truths that they are being taught, thus strengthening their faith. Perhaps this is what Luke was hoping would come to fruition through his book Luke-Acts, as the early Christians would "be strengthened and encouraged as they saw how Jesus' life and death truly fulfilled what the prophets had earlier proclaimed, how God confirmed the life and teachings of Jesus by numerous miracles, and so forth."<sup>109</sup>

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<sup>107</sup> Though it was not primarily evangelistic, it still had evangelistic purposes though the chief purpose was to give Theophilus a full and reliable account of what he had been taught, to strengthen his faith. See French L. Arrington, "Luke," in *Life in the Spirit: New Testament Commentary*, eds. French L. Arrington and Roger Stronstad (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1999), 393; I. Howard Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1978), 43.

<sup>108</sup> This idea of certainty deserves a greater exposition than given in this paper as well as the pre-modern view of time which indicates that the chronological certainty some commentators argue for in Luke's gospel may be incorrect.

<sup>109</sup> Stein, *Luke*, 66.

Luke's aim and purpose was that Theophilus and those reading Luke-Acts would have no more reason to doubt who Jesus was and what he had accomplished on the cross.<sup>110</sup> This type of certainty plays a part in the goal of catechesis, yet is it possible to remove all doubt? In all likelihood, probably not, but it is an important part of religious instruction to work through such doubts. It is unclear as to why Theophilus seemed to have doubts and needed assurance of the teachings he had received. Some posit that he may have been troubled over the denials of the resurrection and historical facts about Jesus. Since the time of His resurrection, those who have opposed Jesus have tried to put doubt into the biblical accounts of his life, death, and resurrection.<sup>111</sup>

Pre-teens are also facing a similar world of uncertainty. They are experiencing much change physically and relationally with their peers, friends, and families and now the added category of technology, things are in constant flux. There are a variety of worldviews vying for their attention, many of which will preach a different gospel or truth than the Bible. This is not unlike what Theophilus may have been experiencing back in his day. A catechetical youth discipleship must address this uncertainty and provide young Christians with a sense of security that they are able to trust what they have been taught about Jesus and God, especially in a world that tends to teach a message counter to the message of Christ.<sup>112</sup> This catechism cannot consist solely of abstract propositional truths about God; it must be truth that gives young people confidence and a truth that is

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<sup>110</sup> Trent C. Butler, *Luke*, Holman New Testament Commentary, vol. 3 (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2000), 7.

<sup>111</sup> Walter L. Liefeld, "Luke" in *Matthew, Mark, Luke*, The Expositor's Bible Commentary, vol. 8 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984), 823.

<sup>112</sup> For example, the message for teenagers that their body is their own, to do with whatever they want sexually, as long as they don't cause harm, is constantly bombarding teenage minds through music, movies, literature, etc. This message is contrary to what the Bible teaches about sexual purity and keeping sexual relations between one man and one woman in the context of a monogamous life-long marriage.

lived out in real life. Catechetical youth discipleship is intended to do for pre-teens what Luke is attempting to do for Theophilus. It must give an assurance that what they understand as the gospel is true. R.C. Sproul articulates it this way, “It is not as if he (Luke) says, ‘I realize other gospels have been written, but you can’t trust them, so let me set the record straight!’ Rather, he is attempting to fill out some of the bare details in the other gospels, in order to give a more comprehensive record.”<sup>113</sup> A Catechism is not meant to teach everything, but to give assurance in what the pre-teen already knows, to give correction to misinformation, and to provide new information that has not yet been learned.

One of the strengths of Luke’s work for Theophilus was his credibility: “having investigated everything carefully from the beginning” (Luke 1:3). Luke illustrates an important aspect of catechetical youth discipleship: the ones who are presenting and teaching the catechism must have lives that are credible. Luke was intentional and thorough in his investigation and in the same manner the ones who teach (i.e. parents, youth pastors, youth leaders) must also have put significant time into examining and investigating the word of God that they are presenting for teaching is powerful when the message and the teacher’s life match.<sup>114</sup>

#### *Acts 18.24-28*

In Acts 18.24-28 Luke uses the term *katēcheō* again, but this time he is enhancing Apollos’ limited instruction in the way of God. At this time in Church history, Paul has

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<sup>113</sup> R. C. Sproul, *A Walk With God: An Exposition of Luke* (Great Britain: Christian Focus Publications, 1999), 11.

<sup>114</sup> Darrell L. Bock, *Luke*, The NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 44.

left Ephesus and is traveling around strengthening the believers. It is during this time that Apollos comes to Ephesus. Apollos is described as a learned biblical scholar with the knowledge of John's baptism. He came to Ephesus teaching accurately about Jesus, but he had a limited understanding of the gospel. Two mature believers (Priscilla and Aquila) who had travelled around with Paul took Apollos aside to give him a deeper understanding of the gospel. It is in this context that catechesis is used to bring about fuller understanding, to expand the limits of Apollos' perspective on Christ. Apollos was a student of the word and was accurate in all that he taught; his problem was that he had a limited perspective on Christ and therefore still had more to learn. Many young Christians can be like Apollos, in that they have a limited knowledge of Jesus and faith. They have received their religious education from Sunday school stories, picture book bibles, Veggie Tales, Adventures in Odyssey, etc. They have a pre-conceived idea of who Jesus is from what they have heard once a week in a youth or church service. These pre-teens need mentors like Priscilla and Aquila to come alongside them to share with them a fuller perspective of Christ and the Word of God.

In this passage Luke uses the term *katēcheō* in a technical sense of instruction as "if 'the way of the Lord' refers to God's redemptive work in Christ and in history."<sup>115</sup> This passage gives a snapshot as to how the Early Church dealt with those who were weak or incomplete in their faith. Apollos knew John's gospel of repentance and most likely did not receive the traditional apostolic Christian teaching although he was aware of the ministry of Jesus. His limited knowledge of Jesus' ministry probably came through

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<sup>115</sup> Verbrugge, *New Testament Theology*, 297.

the disciples of John, from whom he had learned about the baptism of John.<sup>116</sup> This limited knowledge was why Apollos had an incomplete understanding of the gospel,<sup>117</sup> thus alluding to why he needed more training. This is similar to some of the teaching in the Church today, particularly with the Moralistic Therapeutic Deism that is rampant throughout North America today. The result of this further training is that Apollos “powerfully refuted the Jews in public, demonstrating by the Scriptures that Jesus was the Christ” (Acts 18.28).

There are three catechetical discipleship factors in this story that can help young Christians gain a fuller understanding of their faith so that they, like Apollos, will be able to powerfully refute those who come against them. The first is having gracious mentors who will not publically embarrass, but privately teach the young catechumen in the ways of Christ. It was in the warmth of their home that Priscilla and Aquila brought a fuller understanding to Apollos’ theology.<sup>118</sup> This also highlights the importance of relationship for learning. To know (*yada*) something has a relational element to it, and this is not just a relational connection with knowledge but also with the teacher.

A second factor is having a teachable and humble student. Apollos was an educated man who taught the scriptures well and it would have been easy for him to brush off Priscilla and Aquila, yet he took their instruction and as a result his knowledge and ministry were greatly strengthened. In a catechetical discipleship model it is possible to control the attitude of the teacher and the warmth of the environment however, as in all

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<sup>116</sup> Richard N. Longenecker, *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelein, vol. 9, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1981), 490.

<sup>117</sup> French L. Arrington, “Acts of the Apostles,” in *Life in The Spirit: New Testament Commentary*, ed. French L. Arrington and Roger Stronstad (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1999), 634.

<sup>118</sup> Ajith Fernando, *Acts*, The NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1998), 507.

teaching situations, it is not possible to control the teachability of the student. It is important to simply acknowledge that some students will excel in catechesis while others will not and the teachability and willingness of their heart, like Apollos, will be the deciding factor.

A third factor of catechetical discipleship that can be derived from this passage is that one's knowledge of scripture does not necessarily equate to one's understanding of scripture. As Thomas points out in Apollos' case, "a man's verbal knowledge of the Scriptures may be very extensive and correct, and yet he may be very ignorant of the spiritual import and purpose of the Bible."<sup>119</sup> It is possible to infer from Paul's interaction with the disciples in Ephesus in the next chapter (Acts 19) that Luke was helping the reader to understand the lack of knowledge that Apollos had.<sup>120</sup> It was not solely an intellectual ignorance, but an experiential one. The men in Ephesus that Paul met could very well have been disciples of Apollos (1 Cor 3:4f), since they, like Apollos, only knew John's gospel. Paul was able to help them increase their understanding of Jesus through instruction and the experience of Spirit Baptism. Paul led them to a deeper understanding which was facilitated by a Holy Spirit experience. A teacher can only take his or her students so far, he or she must facilitate opportunities that allow for the movement of the Holy Spirit. Thus catechesis is not a purely intellectual work, it must be done in conjunction with opportunity to experience God.

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<sup>119</sup> David Thomas, *Acts of the Apostles: Expository and Homiletical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1980), 304.

<sup>120</sup> David G. Peterson, *The Acts of the Apostles, The Pillar New Testament Commentary* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2009), 523.

*Acts 21:21,24*

In Acts 21:21, 24, Luke uses the term *katēcheō* to mean “to inform” or “to report” which adds another element to the idea of catechesis. In this situation the elders of the Church in Jerusalem wanted to correct what the Jewish Christians had heard about Paul. Peterson argues that it was not merely a rumor that Paul must correct, rather it was intentional false instruction.<sup>121</sup> It is important to note that what is being reported is an historical action and not doctrine,<sup>122</sup> which implies that catechism is not just for the sake of teaching fuller doctrine, but also for informing those that are being taught with new information or correcting misinformation.<sup>123</sup> In North American Christianity there is much that needs to be corrected<sup>124</sup> and a catechetical discipleship of teenagers is a good place to begin.

This also introduces the idea that our life example can be a teaching moment as well; it can inform Christians as to how they should live. The Christian Jews had been taught (informed) incorrectly about Paul and through his example in Jerusalem he was able to set them straight. It is probable that along the way some modern day pre-teen Christians have also been taught incorrectly about Christ and the Church, either by experience or verbally. A gracious leader can do a lot of positive correction simply through living a visible life consistent with what he or she is teaching. This could also play out in mature Christians in the Church sharing stories with pre-teens of how their faith was made real.

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<sup>121</sup> Peterson, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 585.

<sup>122</sup> Beyer, “katecheo,” 238.

<sup>123</sup> This idea is further discussed in Chapter Three as Packer and Parrett point out that catechesis has a informing ministry using the paradigm of “you have heard this...but I tell you this.”

<sup>124</sup> For more on the problems of North American Christianity see Michael Horton, *Christless Christianity* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2008); Ross Douthat, *Bad Religion* (New York: Free Press, 2012); and Kenda Creasy Dean, *Almost Christian* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010).

## Paul's usage of *katēcheō*

### *Romans 2:18*

In Romans 2:18 Paul is rebuking the Jews for being smug about their learning and status with God. He uses *katēcheō* to indicate that the Jews whom he is addressing have been instructed catechetically in their youth as well as “didactically and continually by the reading and exposition of the Scriptures in the synagogue on the Sabbath day.”<sup>125</sup>

Discipleship is not something that has a beginning and an end, rather the learning continues throughout one's lifetime, though it may take different forms. This reiterates the consistent repetition that is required for effective teaching in a catechetical model of youth discipleship. The term *katēcheō* in this passage clearly means “to instruct” or “to teach” and Paul is equating the idea of Jewish instruction in the Law with a term he later uses for instruction in the gospel.<sup>126</sup> Paul is giving a significant warning to the self-righteous Jews who are educated well enough in the law to pass judgment on other followers of God, yet not well enough to use that knowledge to make sure that they themselves were not guilty of the same judgment.<sup>127</sup> Paul recognizes that the Jews who study the law will gain knowledge of God's will and will recognize the superiority of its teaching. He also notes that the Jews think they are superior to those who have not had

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<sup>125</sup> John Peter Lange, Philip Schaff, F. R. Fay et al., *Romans, A Commentary on the Holy Scriptures* (Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, 2008), 108.

<sup>126</sup> C. E. B. Cranfield, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, The International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh, T&T Clark Ltd., 1975), 166.

<sup>127</sup> John Calvin and John Owen, *Commentary on the Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Romans* (Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, 2010), 103.

this teaching.<sup>128</sup>

Schriener points out that “the participle (*katechoumenos*) should be understood as a causal participle that modifies both of the previous clauses in verse 18,”<sup>129</sup> meaning that the reason the Jews can boast that they know God’s will and can approve the things that are essential, is because they have been instructed in it.<sup>130</sup> Paul uses the term in context of intentional religious instruction. The fact that the Jews became arrogant and missed God’s will helps the modern Christian to remember that simply learning a catechism does not mean one truly knows the will of God or what is essential.

This highlights an important warning for those involved in catechetical discipleship. Students of God’s word can become so fixated on what they are learning that they become arrogant in their own walk and become judgmental of others. Biblical knowledge should not be used to judge others but to help Christians discern what is right and wrong; to know what is excellent (Phil 1:10).

### *1 Corinthians 14:19*

The Corinthian Church struggled with pride and desired the gifts of the Spirit which were deemed spectacular. Speaking in tongues was considered more prestigious than the other gifts. They believed the gift of teaching to be a low and boring responsibility so Paul had to counter their thinking by using extremes: “in the Church I desire to speak five words with my mind, that I may instruct others also, rather than ten thousand words in a tongue”

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<sup>128</sup> Everett F. Harrison, “Romans,” in *Romans-Galatians*, The Expositor’s Bible Commentary, vol. 10 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1976), 33.

<sup>129</sup> Thomas R. Schreiner, *Romans*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1998), 130.

<sup>130</sup> Douglas Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1996), 161; Cranfield, *Epistle to the Romans*, 166.

(1 Cor 14.19). He uses the technical term *katēcheō* (“to instruct in the faith,”)<sup>131</sup> in the context of the proper use of spiritual gifts in order to convey spiritual teaching. It is not the ordinary word that is used for teaching in the New Testament and is more in line with “informing” or “instructing” in religious matters.<sup>132</sup> Paul is using the term as religious instruction, instruction by word of mouth<sup>133</sup> in a congregational setting as the assembly is clearly the regular liturgical gathering of the Church in Corinth.<sup>134</sup>

There is no doubt that spiritual gifts, such as speaking in tongues, has a place in the Church, but one must not forget teaching. If the Church cannot be edified and taught, it cannot grow in maturity. Paul’s use of “with my mind” indicates that he understand what he was teaching and was able to express it in a way that was intelligible to the Church so they could understand it and benefit from it.<sup>135</sup>

### *Galatians 6:6*

#### Value of Teaching

In Galatians 6:6 Paul is writing to the Church in Galatia about being faithful with what God had given them, particularly money. Paul felt that teaching the word of God was valuable, so much so that he believed that teachers should be paid and that this payment was honoring to God. The statement “let the one who is taught the word share all good

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<sup>131</sup> Verbrugge, *New Testament Theology*, 297.

<sup>132</sup> Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1987), 676, n.59.

<sup>133</sup> Archibald Robertson and Alfred Plummer, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on The First Epistle of St Paul to the Corinthians*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., The International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark Ltd., 1914), 315.

<sup>134</sup> Raymond F. Collins, *First Corinthians*, Sacra Pagina Series, vol. 7 (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1999), 504.

<sup>135</sup> Albert Barnes, *1 Corinthians*, Notes on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1949), 267.

things with him who teaches” (v. 6) gives insight into the world of early Christian teachers, “whose primary responsibility was to pass on traditions from the apostles and to interpret those traditions for their churches.”<sup>136</sup> It is argued that Paul is talking about the specific role of paid teacher<sup>137</sup> in this verse. This teaching role may not have been a full-time instructor at an established institution, but he had a specific status which Paul deemed worthy of compensation.<sup>138</sup> This clearly establishes “the validity and necessity of a professional teaching ministry in the congregation.”<sup>139</sup>

### Teaching Ministry in the Church

Dunn notes that teaching would be an enormous task and the one teaching would need to “absorb the range of material already part of a church’s founding traditions, to master it and to be responsible for retaining it within the community (in oral form), for recalling it in church gatherings, and for giving instruction in it as occasion demanded.”<sup>140</sup> Though this is most likely not an indication that the Early Church had a fully developed catechism at this point, it is however, the first evidence of a possible paid teaching office in the Early Church.<sup>141</sup> It is even possible that Paul introduced the term *katēchōn* for a teacher of the word of God.<sup>142</sup> Richard Longenecker makes a few inferences from this passage: “that formal Christian instruction was going on in the churches of Galatia...the

<sup>136</sup> Scot McKnight, *Galatians*, The NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995), 286.

<sup>137</sup> Ernest De Witt Burton, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians* The International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark Ltd., 1980), 335.

<sup>138</sup> Ronald Y. K. Fung, *The Epistle to the Galatians*, The New International Commentary of the New Testament (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1988), 293.

<sup>139</sup> Beyer, “katecheo,” 639.

<sup>140</sup> James D. G. Dunn, *The Epistle to the Galatians*, Black’s New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1993), 328.

<sup>141</sup> James Montgomery Boice, “Galatians,” in *Romans-Galatians*, The Expositor’s Bible Commentary, vol. 10 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1976), 503.

<sup>142</sup> Verbrugge, *New Testament Theology*, 297.

content of what was instructed and learned was the Christian message; that Christian teaching was then a full-time—or at least a heavily time-consuming—occupation that deserved material and/or financial compensation.”<sup>143</sup> For Paul, the teaching of the faith was considered a valuable role in the Early Church and therefore should be considered as such now. A catechetical youth discipleship would require teachers that are dedicated and honored for the work that they do with young people.

### The Word as Content

Galatians 6:6 also gives insight into the content for instruction in catechesis. Fung believes that the content for this catechesis would come primarily from the apostolic traditions (cf. 1 Cor 11:2; 2 Thess 2:15; 3:6).<sup>144</sup> Burton is more specific and suggests that the term for “the word” (*ton logon*) is used as “an inclusive term for the Christian message” most likely dealing with the doctrines of 1) God, 2) the life, death and resurrection of Jesus, 3) the way of salvation, and 4) fundamental Christian ethics.<sup>145</sup> Ridderbos believes that this instruction of the word is the teaching that comes after hearing the gospel for the first time.<sup>146</sup> Dunn suggests that the catechetical teaching in this passage is not a pre-baptismal catechesis but post-baptismal catechesis to instruct “new Christians in the things which distinguish them as Christians, within and in relation to the wider Jewish and Greco-Roman communities...the ramifications of the gospel, and

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<sup>143</sup> Richard N. Longenecker, *Galatians*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 41 (Dallas: Word Books, 1990), 279.

<sup>144</sup> Fung, *Galatians*, 293.

<sup>145</sup> Burton, *Galatians*, 337-38.

<sup>146</sup> Herman N. Ridderbos, *The Epistle of Paul to the Churches in Galatia*, The new International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1953), 217-18.

Christian interpretation of the Jewish Scriptures.”<sup>147</sup> Thus, a catechesis could have an element that focuses on how young people are to live as followers of Jesus, distinguished from the culture around them. One implication of this verse might be that the instruction taught to pre-teens might include the ramifications of how the gospel might affect how they live their lives.

### **Summary**

This theological survey has attempted to show the importance of a catechetical youth discipleship. It has shown that catechesis must aim for the heart of pre-teens today. The word of God must be taught in such a way as to infect the souls of pre-teens to move them towards faithful obedience to God. The imprintation of the hearts of pre-teens will begin through consistent repetitious teaching in everyday life. It will continue through the passing down of God’s truth and story from one generation to the next in a way that is effective in reaching the heart of pre-teens. It must be done in a way that young people understand and that will help prepare them for their role in the Church as followers of Jesus. The most logical place for this to take place is the family unit; however since a traditional nuclear family is not always an option today, the Church must also step in and become spiritual foster parents to pre-teens who need religious training, but have no one to teach them. This Christian teaching is meant to endow pre-teens with confidence and security in the faith by strengthening that which is lacking and bringing correction against mis-information. A catechetical youth discipleship will need humble, dedicated men and women who understand the high honor it is to teach the faith to the next generation.

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<sup>147</sup> Dunn, *Galatians*, 327.

The Church is looking to disciple young people to be strong and loyal in their faith and catechism may just be the answer. Not the catechism of the past however, but one that in substance, passes the test of the Early Church, yet in form is effective to bring about appropriate spiritual maturity in pre-teens today. What would the form look like? What is the role of the Holy Spirit, youth pastor, parents, and the Church in the catechizing of young Christians? These are some of the questions that will be answered in the next chapter by examining what has been done in the past and what is being done in the present with catechesis.

## CHAPTER THREE

### A LITERATURE REVIEW

#### Introduction

The Church is seeking to disciple young people in order for them to be strong and loyal in their faith and this thesis-project proposes that catechesis is part of the solution. Not necessarily the catechism of the past however, but one that in substance passes the test of the Early Church, yet in form is effective to bring about appropriate spiritual maturity in teenagers today. The Church of North America needs a renewed, theological, experiential, and Spirit empowered catechesis for youth discipleship. This chapter will examine certain themes within the literature pertaining to catechesis in order to inform the development of a Pentecostal catechesis. These themes are as follows: the hermeneutical context, the design and method, and contemporary praxis.

#### The Hermeneutical Context

Many, if not all, of the catechisms available for the Church today lie outside the influence of Pentecostal theology. Since this project is concerned with increasing theological comprehension in Pentecostal pre-teens it is imperative that Pentecostal hermeneutics be briefly explored in order to provide a context for this project. John Wyckoff provides this in his book, *Pneuma and Logos*. He attempts to answer the following question: “In contemporary understanding, what, if any, is the relationship of the Holy Spirit to biblical hermeneutics.”<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> John W. Wyckoff, *Pneuma and Logos: The Role of the Spirit in Biblical Hermeneutics* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2010), 4.

He argues that if one believes the Bible to be God's special revelation to humanity then there are two possibilities for interpretation. The first possibility is that humanity is able to understand this special revelation by their natural senses and rational reasoning. The second possibility is that humanity is not able to comprehend God's word on their own and requires the aid of God through the Holy Spirit to bring about correct understanding of God's word for today.

In order to find which possibility is most likely, Wyckoff explores interpretation of scripture throughout Church history. He begins his search with the Church Fathers who viewed Scripture from a spiritual lens. They mined Scripture for the spiritual meaning of the text that the Holy Spirit illuminated for them. He notes that there was a shift in this spiritual hermeneutic toward one that valued reason above spiritual. Aquinas did not rely on the Holy Spirit for interpretation but the power of reason and the mind. This type of hermeneutic was not to last though, and during the Renaissance there was a renewed interest in clear interpretation of the scripture. Faith was put before reason once again when interpreting Scripture.

Wyckoff maintains that Luther believed the Holy Spirit assisted the interpreter and it was not possible to interpret Scripture correctly without the Spirit. Although the Holy Spirit was necessary, it was also believed that human effort was part of the equation. This belief gave rise to understanding historical and grammatical elements for correct interpretation. According to Wyckoff, Calvin followed suit with Luther in putting faith before reason. He also believed that one needed the Holy Spirit for correct understanding of Scripture. Throughout the Reformation and post-Reformation the Holy Spirit was considered crucial for the interpretation of Scripture though there were those

that attempted to lessen man's reliance on the Spirit. One example that Wyckoff puts forth is German theologian, Schleiermacher. In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries Schleiermacher promoted the historical-critical method of interpretation to the forefront while trying to dismiss the need for the Holy Spirit. During this time Barth and the Neo-Orthodox Christians pushed back and brought the role of the Holy Spirit for interpretation back to the forefront.

In America a hermeneutic developed that accepted divine inspiration of Scripture but denied the Holy Spirit's role in the interpretation of that scripture. This was not to be the final stop in the Church's hermeneutical history though, and "contemporary scholars conclude that, along with the historical criticism, the role of the Holy Spirit in hermeneutics must be taken seriously."<sup>2</sup>

It is evident from Wyckoff's work that contemporary scholars are as divided on the role of the Holy Spirit as their predecessors. He notes that those who posit that the Spirit does play a role have difficulty in describing it. It is an intangible element of biblical interpretation. Thus, in light of his historical survey on the role or need of the Holy Spirit for proper biblical interpretation, Wyckoff poses two questions to the interpreter regarding the Holy Spirit: 1) "Does the Holy Spirit play an essential, authentic role in the hermeneutical process?" and 2) "What major questions are raised when the Spirit is envisioned as having a role in interpretation and how may these questions be answered?"<sup>3</sup>

Wyckoff argues that a teacher model is best in helping one understand the role and importance of the Holy Spirit in regards to biblical interpretation. He presents the

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<sup>2</sup> Wyckoff, *Pneuma and Logos*, 39.

<sup>3</sup> Wyckoff, *Pneuma and Logos*, 52.

“teacher as facilitator” paradigm as the most favorable method in understanding the Holy Spirit’s role in biblical interpretation. His argument is that this view “accurately represents the basic views favored by a majority of scholars who speak to the issue of the Holy Spirit’s relationship to hermeneutics.”<sup>4</sup>

Wyckoff implies that it is the role of the Holy Spirit to illuminate scripture so that the Christian can know God. It is quite possible and expected for the reader to use his or her natural cognitive abilities to study scripture and learn about God. In order to know God relationally though is a work of the Holy Spirit. The two roles of Spirit as active teacher and Christian as active learner are inseparable, and both must occur for correct interpretation to take place. Christians have sole control over one (themselves) and therefore are only able to test one aspect (themselves as learners). Wyckoff argues that the teacher is a mediator who helps students to “interact with information and ideas in terms of personal meaning and previous learnings”<sup>5</sup>

The Holy Spirit’s role in this paradigm is to illuminate what is being read or learned. Wyckoff equates this to a teacher who works side by side with his or her students as they wrestle through difficult portions of a text book. The student in the paradigm is actively taking responsibility for his or her own learning and is willing to work co-operatively with the teacher. This translates to the pupil studying the Bible (in the case of this project, the catechumen) using whatever tools or methods are available to him or her (i.e. commentaries, hermeneutics) while relying on illumination from the Spirit as a cooperative task in interpretation.

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<sup>4</sup> Wyckoff, *Pneuma and Logos*, 128.

<sup>5</sup> Wyckoff, *Pneuma and Logos*, 106.

In this paradigm the outcomes of learning are concerned with higher levels of learning and understanding; moving beyond objective knowledge to subjective and experiential knowledge. In the interpretive process this would be understood as moving beyond meaning to significance. This connects with the experiential understanding of *yada* in that knowledge is more than mere cognitive understanding. This is the intangible part of interpretation and catechesis that is not measurable and out of the control of the teacher or student. Though it is possible to measure increases in levels of learning, the level at which the Holy Spirit aids this increase is not possible to quantify. This paradigm is important to discuss because it provides a model, not only for the catechizer to understand the role of the Holy Spirit in catechesis, but it also provides a model for the catechizer to follow in catechizing others. As one prepares or teaches a Pentecostal catechism, he or she must understand the role of the Holy Spirit and allow room for Him to illuminate God's truth directly to the catechumen. The teacher is a guide, asking the right questions and keeping the students on the right course, while allowing room for the Holy Spirit to instruct intellectually and experientially.

## **Design and Methodology**

### **Grounded in the Gospel**

The second theme addressed in developing a Pentecostal catechism is the design and methodology of historical catechisms of the Church. Historically, Pentecostals have severed ties with much of its pre-Pentecost history. Yet as Packer and Parrett argue in

their book, *Grounded in the Gospel*,<sup>6</sup> the idea of catechesis connects one with two thousand years of history and community. They point out that the decline in biblical literacy among Christians today is in direct relation to the decline in catechesis in the Church. The eclipse of catechesis in the Church is the “deepest root of the immaturity that is so widespread in evangelical circles”<sup>7</sup> and they desire to restore it as a basic discipleship discipline of the Church. Thus it is imperative for Pentecostals to explore the history of catechesis throughout the Church

They are quick to point out that catechesis is not a Roman Catholic idea, but a biblical one. This correction of perception is one that is significant for those in Pentecostal circles, especially the BC/Yukon District of the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada. In the pastoral survey mentioned in Chapter One, many of the respondents were concerned that using catechesis to disciple young people could lead to the catholicizing and/or the intellectualizing of the Pentecostal Church. To help the reader understand catechesis as a biblical notion, the authors walk through the Old Testament and New Testament illustrating the call to catechesis and how it is used catechetically. This is especially helpful for the context of this thesis-project to alleviate fears of those that feel catechesis is solely Catholic indoctrination that is too intellectual.

Parrett and Packer illustrate that from early on in Israel’s history God is concerned with His people knowing Him and knowing about Him and that this knowing would lead to obedience to walk in the way of the LORD (Deut 6, 11; Ps 1, 78). They examine New Testament terms (i.e. *katecheo*, *didache*, *pardosis*, *paradidomi*) to ascertain

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<sup>6</sup> J. I. Packer and Gary A. Parrett, *Grounded in the Gospel: Building Believers the Old-Fashioned Way* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2010).

<sup>7</sup> Packer and Parrett, *Grounded*, 9.

that catechesis is concerned with the teaching and passing on of sound doctrine and tradition. Though *katecheo* was not necessarily used as the technical term for catechism in the New Testament “it became such a term soon afterward.”<sup>8</sup> From their study they believe that a catechism must be Christ-centered, pre-emptive and responsive to culture, and it must deal with doctrine “as practical truths to be grasped, responded to, and lived out by everyone.”<sup>9</sup> The authors argue that this catechesis, or passing on of sound doctrine and tradition, was “not merely for cognitive apprehension, but for the holistic transformation of individual believers and for the maturing of those believers together as the body of Christ.”<sup>10</sup> According to them, believers have been commanded to teach others catechetically and this command is rooted in the Great Commission of Jesus.

Catechism has been around for most of Church history, though, it has waxed and waned throughout the history of the Church. The authors intimate that when Christian communities were healthy, a serious catechetical ministry was present and when Christian communities were unhealthy, this ministry was lacking. They survey from the time of Augustine, when catechesis was a vibrant part of church life, through Luther and the Reformation, which the authors believe to be a reaction to a long decline in catechesis in the Church. Catechesis waned again and was revived briefly by Puritan pastor Richard Baxter who had great success for a small period of time in his local parish. This revival was short lived though, and catechesis was once again on the decline

Packer and Parrett emphasize that catechism has traditionally consisted of four fixtures: The Apostle’s Creed, the Decalogue, the Lord’s Prayer, and the Sacraments.

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<sup>8</sup> Packer and Parrett, *Grounded*, 39.

<sup>9</sup> Packer and Parrett, *Grounded*, 47.

<sup>10</sup> Packer and Parrett, *Grounded*, 42.

Though there have been various orderings of these four fixtures, this formula has been consistent throughout the past 2000 years. Of the four pillars, the sacraments tend to be the most debated and at times is left off the list. For Pentecostals it would make sense to only use three of the four pillars—Apostle’s Creed, the Decalogue, and the Lord’s Prayer—since the PAOC is not a sacramental fellowship. Baptism and the Eucharist do occur within PAOC churches, but they are not considered sacraments and are not necessary for faith in Jesus and relationship with God. Thus it would be better to think of a Pentecostal catechism as a three legged stool founded on, as Parrett and Packer express it, the way (the Decalogue), the truth (the Apostle’s creed), and the life (the Lord’s Prayer). There is no doubt from their research that this threefold facet of faith is biblical and should be the foundation of any catechesis: “Taught by the truth and liberated by the Life, we walk in the Way.”<sup>11</sup>

Packer and Parrett lay the foundation for this catechism within the gospel. Christ must be at the center of the catechism for without the gospel of Jesus Christ there is no need for catechism. Thus the gospel is the starting line, followed by sound doctrine (truth), the way of living (way), and experience of living (life). This line of thinking supplements what Horton expressed about right doctrine leading to right behaviour.<sup>12</sup> For Pentecostals, relationship and experience is where one tends to begin. Doctrine is of extreme importance, however, the Pentecostal movement was built out of experienced doctrine (e.g. the Baptism of the Holy Spirit evidenced by the speaking in tongues). Thus a Pentecostal catechism must reorder the structure to begin with the Gospel, then explore the experience of living, and sound doctrine in light of this experience. One must come to

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<sup>11</sup> Packer and Parrett, *Grounded*, 136.

<sup>12</sup> See page 28.

know God first and then learn about Him. This will produce a disciple who is then wanting to move to obedience. Knowledge without relationship is not a great motivator for action.

### Martin Luther's Catechisms: Forming the Faith

Another book that informs the design and methodology of this thesis-project is Timothy Wengert's book *Martin Luther's Catechisms*.<sup>13</sup> As the title of his book suggests Wengert writes about Luther's small and large catechisms. He argues that Luther's Small Catechism is a valuable tool that the Church needs to rediscover. He describes it as a work that "crosses boundaries of culture and time to meet the heart. It confesses the Christian faith in clear, simple language."<sup>14</sup> The small catechism is meant to be utilized in the home. It is a spiritual aid for "beleaguered Christian parents, helping them answer the deepest questions and explain the central texts and activities of the Christian assembly."<sup>15</sup> The large catechism, though, was meant to be a guide for the number of biblical illiterate pastors that Luther had observed in his travels and consisted of Luther's own catechetical preaching.

Wengert notes that Martin Luther wrote his catechisms in response to a religion that positioned moral behavior at its pinnacle and in order to challenge this notion he changed the order of his catechism from what was traditionally practiced. Instead of moving from creed, to commandments to prayer he re-ordered the first two, moving from commandments to creed. This, according to Wengert, shifted the focus from good works,

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<sup>13</sup> Timothy J. Wengert, *Martin Luther's Catechisms: Forming the Faith* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2009).

<sup>14</sup> Wengert, *Martin Luther's Catechisms*, 2.

<sup>15</sup> Wengert, *Martin Luther's Catechisms*, vii.

to the gospel since the Decalogue is “God’s way of ordering our lives and restraining evil and God’s way of revealing our sin and driving us to Christ.”<sup>16</sup> Luther did not let the Decalogue stand alone as Wengert notes, he understood that law with gospel leads to hopelessness and gospel without law leads to the abuse of grace. It is these two extremes—legalism and antinomianism—that Luther is combating during his life time and one could argue that they are still very much a struggle in the Church today. There is a great focus on the grace and love of Jesus, with little thought being given to the law or holiness of God. This is part of why a Pentecostal catechism should start with prayer; it is about relationship with God. The gospel is incarnated in God and one must be in relationship with him to better understand the grace behind the law. Thus a Pentecostal perspective shifts Luther’s order from commandment → creed → prayer to prayer → creed → commandment. One begins with knowing God through relationship which is strengthened by the learning about God through the creeds and this is solidified by behavior that reflects the character of God; right doctrine experienced leads to right behavior. This paper will explore each of these three aspects of Luther’s catechism in light of how Luther’s work can influence a Pentecostal Catechism for today.

### *The Decalogue*

Wengert argues that Luther viewed the first commandment as the heart of the law and its fulfillment comes “only out of a faith that refuses to worship pleasure or power and that worships only the God who gives all good things and protects from all evil.”<sup>17</sup> It was in light of this commandment that Luther understood each of the other nine. He viewed the

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<sup>16</sup> Wengert, *Martin Luther’s Catechisms*, 21.

<sup>17</sup> Wengert, *Martin Luther’s Catechisms*, 27.

Ten Commandments as “the clearest statement of God’s law written on each human heart”<sup>18</sup> and “God uses all the commandments to promote the life of creation and to restrain from evil...[and] forces humanity to come face-to-face with its sin.”<sup>19</sup>

For Luther, according to Wengert, the chief function of the Decalogue was to reveal our sin. It was not a list of rules to get into heaven, rather it was a mirror to show man his deficiency and how much humanity is truly separated from God. He states that humanity “can do nothing worse than to ignore their main function: to put the old creature in us to death by showing our sin and driving us to the one place where there is help—the gospel.”<sup>20</sup> Luther used the commandments to address social issues of the time and recognized that God’s law was able to speak to contemporary Christians just as significantly as to ancient Israelites. He used the commandments not simply to say, “do not do this” but he also understood the significance of what the commandments did not say. For example, when God commands Israel to not commit murder, He is also telling them to embrace life.

Luther’s use of the commandments to address contemporary issues is something that connects well with Pentecostal theology. Pentecostals are concerned with the application or liveability of theology. Both relevance and interest are increased through relating what God commanded for ancient Israel to the world today. It is important that a Pentecostal catechism be able to connect God’s word to real life.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Wengert, *Martin Luther’s Catechisms*, 30.

<sup>19</sup> Wengert, *Martin Luther’s Catechisms*, 32.

<sup>20</sup> Wengert, *Martin Luther’s Catechisms*, 40.

<sup>21</sup> To illustrate this, in this project’s catechesis program all of the learning goals were about connecting the lives of the catechists to the theology discussed (e.g. “I am able to connect my life with God’s creation of the world”). See Appendix D.

### *Creed*

According to Luther, the Christian must start with the work of the Spirit because one is not able to believe in or understand God without the Holy Spirit's revelation. He expresses the Trinity in reverse, "the Holy Spirit makes known the Son, whom we could not know and who is in turn the mirror of the Father's heart."<sup>22</sup> This ordering makes sense for the Pentecostal as the Spirit plays a large role in interpretation and understanding of God's word. There is a subjective feel to Luther's work and Wengert notes this: "Luther was not expounding facts to be learned or outlining doctrines to be believed; instead he was confessing his faith."<sup>23</sup> This confession came from his experience with God, and it was only through the Holy Spirit that he was able to confess any truth about the Father or the Son. The creeds are about an event, an experience with God that is made real through the work of the Holy Spirit. This is the passing down of the Faith from one generation to the next. It makes it personal which is important for Pentecostals who believe in the priesthood of all believers. Salvation is an event, the crucifixion is an event and the Truth about God can be experienced. This experiential aspect of God's truth has an important role in a Pentecostal Catechism.

### *The Lord's Prayer*

Luther's life was full of answered and unanswered prayer and according to Wengert, his understanding of prayer was in direct correlation to his experience as a Christian. He recognized that though he believed God heard every prayer He did not answer them according to an individual's expectations. Prayer took faith, though there were times that

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<sup>22</sup> Wengert, *Martin Luther's Catechisms*, 44.

<sup>23</sup> Wengert, *Martin Luther's Catechisms*, 48.

he would turn it in to a spiritual work that was accomplished by humans as opposed to God. Luther shied away from using theology to try and understand why God had not answered his prayer; he would rest in God's promises and he believed that "the faith created through the gospel as confessed in the Creed does not cure the illness. Instead, the believer, as believer, is immediately driven to pray."<sup>24</sup> Prayer is in response to doubt. It was argued in Chapter One that the lack of opportunity for young people to express their doubt was a struggle for young Christians.<sup>25</sup> The Lord's Prayer teaches the Church that when God does not act the way one desires or acts in a way that does not make sense, the believer must remain steadfast in prayer. He or she must pray because it is this prayer that connects him or her to God. Ultimately it is about one's relationship with God.

When examining the Lord's Prayer Luther asks two questions of each petition: "What is this?" and "How does this come about?" These two simple questions are paramount in connecting the Lord's Prayer to everyday life. It causes the believer to examine what is theologically going on (e.g. What does it mean that God's kingdom would come on earth?) as well as how that theology would play out in actual life (e.g. How does God's kingdom come on earth in one's life?). According to Wengert the answer to the second question, for Luther, was that God must act, though this can be taken deeper and cause one to ask, "What does it look like in my life for God to act this way?" Believers are to look for God's action (grace) "in the Holy Spirit's work to reveal Christ, who is the mirror of the Father's heart."<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Wengert, *Martin Luther's Catechisms*, 75.

<sup>25</sup> See page 9.

<sup>26</sup> Wengert, *Martin Luther's Catechisms*, 97.

## A Faithful Church

The third book that is helpful for informing the design and methodology for this project is a collection of essays, *A Faithful Church: Issues in the History of Catechesis*,<sup>27</sup> which was edited by John Westerhoff and O.C. Edwards. It identifies catechesis as “the process by which persons are initiated into the Christian community and its faith, revelation, and vocation; the process by which persons throughout lifetimes are continually converted and nurtured, transformed and formed, by and in its living tradition.”<sup>28</sup> The series of essays in this book walk through the history of catechesis in the Church in an effort to define the future for catechesis in the Church. This book is helpful in developing a basic understanding of catechesis, its past, present and future. This book, like *Grounded in the Gospel*, connects Pentecostals to a deep and rich ecclesial history that provides insightful information for the development of a Pentecostal catechism today.

## *The New Testament Church*

Though there was not formal catechesis in the time of Jesus and the apostles, O. C. Edwards, Jr. attempts to reconstruct one by inference. He acknowledges that it is impossible to truly know the educational methodology of the Early Church, though it is possible to know the “vast array of structures that existed to inculcate and reinforce a sense of Christian identity.”<sup>29</sup> This is an important aspect of Christianity since it is the passing down of the faith from one generation to another and as Edwards points out, the early Church had certain structures in place (i.e. preaching, worship, teaching) that

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<sup>27</sup> John H. Westerhoff III and O.C. Edwards, Jr., *A Faithful Church: Issues in the History of Catechesis* (Wilton, Conn.: Morehouse-Barlow Co., Inc, 1981).

<sup>28</sup> Westerhoff and Edwards, *A Faithful Church*, 1.

<sup>29</sup> Westerhoff and Edwards, *A Faithful Church*, 45.

allowed them to teach new Christians the foundations of their beliefs and infuse the eschatological hope that Jesus was going to return. This not only strengthened individual believers, it also strengthened the Church by reinforcing a sense of Christian identity amongst believers. In a sense, these structures were a way of socializing Christians, particularly since Christianity was alien to the culture it was founded in. This was especially needed since the Church began to grow quickly and needed to be institutionalized because of the sheer number of new Christians. Catechesis became a way of socializing or initiating new Christians into the Kingdom way of life.

### *The Ancient Church*

Catechesis, during the period of the Ancient Church, was concerned with Christian living. Leonel Mitchell points out that it was going to take more than an intellectual exercise in order to produce the necessary change in behaviour and culture. What was needed was a context that was ripe for “conversion and growth into Christ.”<sup>30</sup> Through *The Apostolic Tradition*, Mitchell highlights this context as a separate class of believers in the Church called catechumens. They were expected to spend three years as hearers of the word and it was their conduct, not time as a catechumen, that was judged. This is evidenced when they were baptized for it was a sponsor who gave testimony on behalf of the catechumen according to how they lived. Thus “the instruction which they received was primarily in Christian living and was to enable them to adopt what we would call a Christian lifestyle, not to make them theologians.”<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Westerhoff and Edwards, *A Faithful Church*, 49.

<sup>31</sup> Westerhoff and Edwards, *A Faithful Church*, 52.

### *The Medieval Church*

As time passed and the Church grew numerically, it was this success, according to Gatch, that led to the decline in catechesis as the primary method of initiating new believers into the Church. There was no need for a class of catechumens once Rome became a Christian empire and the Church began baptizing infants instead. The main reason was “the fact that, as the populace of the Roman Empire became Christianized, the class of catechumens or candidates for initiation virtually disappeared.”<sup>32</sup> Instead of adults seeking baptism, the majority of baptism were those of infants.

### *The Continental Reformation of the Sixteenth Century*

William Haugaard notes that though the Church had lost its primacy in the role of faith instruction during the Medieval period, the reformers restored this teaching ministry to the Church, considering catechesis a primary responsibility of the Church and its leaders. The whole body of believers, which included the family, were meant to partner with Church leadership in this faith formation. Protestant pastors used their pulpits to catechize their entire congregations while giving particular catechetical instruction to the young people. Parents were also to instruct their children in the faith at home while modeling a Christian lifestyle.

The reformers desired that all Christians would know and understand the gospel. They insisted that “trust *in* God, arising out of a knowledge *of* him, must lead the believer *to* respond to him.”<sup>33</sup> Haugaard also suggests that the Bible was key in this faith formation for through it “God reached out continuously to initiate, to expand, and to

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<sup>32</sup> Westerhoff and Edwards, *A Faithful Church*, 81.

<sup>33</sup> Westerhoff and Edwards, *A Faithful Church*, 110.

correct the believer's understanding and his response, which formed part of the process of biblical communication."<sup>34</sup> The reformers were so passionate about catechesis that the Haugaard believes that it was during this time that "the catechism" was truly born.

### *The English Reformation*

Throughout the 16<sup>th</sup> century the reformers "agreed that the central goal was to establish a right understanding of God's true religion in England."<sup>35</sup> Thompsett argues that the focus in this era was "the construction of a rigorous program designed to nurture each Tudor citizen—individually and corporately—in knowledge, discipline, and love of God."<sup>36</sup> It was also in reaction to the biblical illiteracy that was rampant among the clergy. Thus, the reformation in England focused on "educating clergy and laity in the fundamentals of the faith, increasing evidence of biblical literacy."<sup>37</sup> The reformers believed that faith was meant for all Christians and education shifted to be a way of forming Christian character. As Thompsett notes, for the English reformers, "education provided a primary means whereby men, women and children in Tudor society were changed toward godly living informed by divine ordinances."<sup>38</sup>

Their methods of education were comprised of three components: "hearing, reading, and study of Holy Scripture; knowledge of the Creed, the Lord's Prayer and the Ten Commandments fulfilled largely by instruction in the Catechism; and communal participation in divine services which encompassed the whole of a person's life."<sup>39</sup> It was

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<sup>34</sup> Westerhoff and Edwards, *A Faithful Church*, 113.

<sup>35</sup> Westerhoff and Edwards, *A Faithful Church*, 174.

<sup>36</sup> Westerhoff and Edwards, *A Faithful Church*, 175.

<sup>37</sup> Westerhoff and Edwards, *A Faithful Church*, 175.

<sup>38</sup> Westerhoff and Edwards, *A Faithful Church*, 181.

<sup>39</sup> Westerhoff and Edwards, *A Faithful Church*, 184.

through preaching that much of the religious instruction was passed onto the believers and more particularly those learning the catechism were to memorize sentences via dialogue between the pastor and the student. Thompsett points out that it was in the home where most of the spiritual instruction took place as “parents were directed to enlighten their children in the doctrines and practices of the faith through a total program of family and public worship, daily study and meditation and the ever-present instruction in the Catechism.”<sup>40</sup>

### *Roman Catholicism*

Not to be left out, the Roman Catholic Church responded to the Reformation with the very tool the reformers were using to change the Church: catechism. Not only was catechism used in attempt to lessen the rise in Protestantism, it also “set the pattern of catechizing in the Roman Church for the next four hundred years.”<sup>41</sup> It was during the Council of Trent in 1546 that the Roman Church leaders decreed that a catechism should be written and it should be “a source book for the use of parish priests in their preaching to and instruction of the faithful.”<sup>42</sup>

According to Bryce the essential form of this Catholic catechesis was found in the context of school; it was through the use of books that children would be catechized. This was one of the biggest differences from the reformers. The reformers believed the home was the primary place for catechesis, while in the Roman Church, “schooling steadily

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<sup>40</sup> Westerhoff and Edwards, *A Faithful Church*, 198.

<sup>41</sup> Westerhoff and Edwards, *A Faithful Church*, 204.

<sup>42</sup> Westerhoff and Edwards, *A Faithful Church*, 208.

established itself as the unchallenged setting for catechesis.”<sup>43</sup> Though the form of catechesis was uniform, the content of the catechisms being taught was not.

### *Eastern Orthodoxy*

Tarasar argues that when exploring the history of catechesis in the Church, the periods in which the Church was weakest corresponded to the periods when catechesis was also at its weakest. Constance Tarasar insists that the Orthodox situation can be described as being engulfed in secularism; a compartmentalizing of life, which faith is only a part and “instead of seeing the Church or the kingdom as the norm by which society is measured, we find the Church being measured by the norms.”<sup>44</sup> She notes that in the twentieth century there had been a renewal of the Orthodox Church which had been tied to education. Yet she would want the reader to understand that Eastern Orthodoxy helps the Church to see that “whatever method, approach, technique, or content, is used for communicating the Christian message, that message can still be rejected...because the person does not *want* to change, does not *want* to sacrifice, does not *want* to make that total commitment that is required as the result of the true understanding and reception of the gospel of the kingdom.”<sup>45</sup> Another lesson from Eastern Orthodoxy is that “catechesis cannot be divorced from the life of the Church, from the sacramental life of the community.”<sup>46</sup> Tarasar argues that “from the first moment of participation in the Body of Christ, the child is being nurtured into the community of faith.”<sup>47</sup> There is no one-size-

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<sup>43</sup> Westerhoff and Edwards, *A Faithful Church*, 220.

<sup>44</sup> Westerhoff and Edwards, *A Faithful Church*, 245.

<sup>45</sup> Westerhoff and Edwards, *A Faithful Church*, 254.

<sup>46</sup> Westerhoff and Edwards, *A Faithful Church*, 255.

<sup>47</sup> Westerhoff and Edwards, *A Faithful Church*, 256.

fits-all catechism and each context must address it in light of the past, present, and desired future.

### *The American Church*

In the American Church, the goal of catechesis was “the development and nurturing of Christian piety, or lifestyle, directing both mind and will in the way of righteousness.”<sup>48</sup> Catechesis was considered a life-long process that began with infant baptism and encompassed the entirety of one’s life. The process was focused on the study of scripture and was considered the primary, though not sole, responsibility of the head of the house. This changed over time and the Church took on the primary role of catechizer. As America matured so did its culture. The separation of Church and state affected catechesis because Christianity only became part of one’s life thus catechesis did not pertain to one’s whole life, but only the religious part. Booty argues that through his examination of the North American Church, it is clear that “catechesis involves the whole of Christian life in the localities where Christians live together under God’s judgment as recipients of God’s grace in the midst of a world in constant danger of self-destruction.”<sup>49</sup>

### *The Future*

In his closing essay, Westerhoff argues that it is the Church’s survival during the past two thousand years that gives credence to the effectiveness of catechesis over the centuries. He states that “the aim of catechesis is to make God’s saving activity or liberating/reconciling Word known, living, conscious, and active in the personal and

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<sup>48</sup> Westerhoff and Edwards, *A Faithful Church*, 261.

<sup>49</sup> Westerhoff and Edwards, *A Faithful Church*, 289.

corporate lives of God's baptized people."<sup>50</sup> He uses the metaphor of a pilgrimage to describe the way forward for catechesis today. The pilgrimage is meant for individual and corporate salvation, it is about "actualizing our true being."<sup>51</sup> He notes that catechesis "is the process by which persons are aided in their pilgrimage of being, that is, becoming what they already are by living into their baptism, working out their salvation, achieving perfection or sanctification."<sup>52</sup> This must take place in the context of an intergenerational community of faith. This pilgrimage "in community requires pilgrims who are guides, more than teachers who are technicians."<sup>53</sup> It is a life long process that must be concerned with the multiple dimensions of knowing: perception, experience, intuitive, affective and responsive dimensions.

### Teaching the Faith, Forming the Faithful

*Teaching the Faith, Forming the Faithful*,<sup>54</sup> by Gary Parrett and S. Steve Kang is an incredible work for the cause of catechesis in the Church today. They divide their work into four questions: Why should the Church engage in the teaching ministry of catechesis? What should be the content of catechesis? Who should be the ones catechizing? And how should this catechesis take place?

### *Why Catechesis?*

Parrett and Kang argue that to understand the importance of why "the Church must ever

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<sup>50</sup> Westerhoff and Edwards, *A Faithful Church*, 298.

<sup>51</sup> Westerhoff and Edwards, *A Faithful Church*, 300.

<sup>52</sup> Westerhoff and Edwards, *A Faithful Church*, 301.

<sup>53</sup> Westerhoff and Edwards, *A Faithful Church*, 302.

<sup>54</sup> Parrett, Gary A. and S. Steve Kang, *Teaching the Faith, Forming the Faithful: A Biblical Vision for Education in the Church* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2009).

engage in faithful ministries of teaching and formation”<sup>55</sup> one must understand God’s great story and one’s place in it. The Church exists to continue the reconciliatory ministry of Christ which was brought forth through Christ’s work on the cross and will be fulfilled when Christ returns. The Church exists as the present part of the plan; participating fully in God’s ongoing plan of reconciliation. Parrett and Kang believe that the ministry of teaching is one of the primary devices Church leaders possess to educate and equip the body of Christ for participation in this ministry of reconciliation. In order to “glorify God by means of walking in good works of reconciliation”<sup>56</sup> the Church must be taught individually and corporately the teachings and commands of Christ.

#### *What is the content of Catechesis?*

The authors explore the formation of the Church and Acts 2:42 to identify essentials for teaching today: 1) the apostle’s teaching, 2) the fellowship, 3) the breaking of bread, and 4) the prayers. According to the authors, Heb 5:11-6:3 is a descriptive list of essentials (not prescriptive) that remind us that Christianity has Jewish roots and more importantly for this project is that “the Gospel must take on appropriate cultural forms wherever it is planted and nurtured.”<sup>57</sup> The authors argue that it is important to delineate between faith that is personal and “the Faith” which is God’s revelation and not our response to it. It is the purpose of catechesis to do both and in order to do so must consist of six ingredients. First it must be relational, meaning that there must be a dynamic interchange between the teacher and the student. Second it must be liturgical, meaning catechesis is done in the

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<sup>55</sup> Parrett and Kang, *Teaching the Faith*, 17.

<sup>56</sup> Parrett and Kang, *Teaching the Faith*, 71.

<sup>57</sup> Parrett and Kang, *Teaching the Faith*, 85.

context of a faith community. Third, catechesis must be holistic in its approach so that it can engage the whole person in the catechizing process. Fourth, it must be aware of the surrounding culture and be culturally responsive. Fifth, it must take into account current teaching practices and be pedagogically strategic. Last, catechesis must be rich in content, it must consist of the Faith.

Parrett and Kang propose a broad outline of what they consider to be the essential ingredients for teaching the Faith to the next generation. The pattern that they propose is witnessed throughout Church history, in the Bible, and in other wisdom literature. The authors argue that this is a well established pattern for catechism that pre-dates the Church. They begin with the Gospel (1 Cor 15:1-5). This is the Grand Biblical Narrative of God. It is His story and how He interacts with His creation and how His creation connects to His story. This would be the four-fold description of history—creation, fall, redemption, and restoration—set out for this project. This is where the Church must begin to give the believer context for his or her life in Christ. Second is sound doctrine that conforms to the Gospel (1 Tim 1:10-11). This is the Creeds or the Truth. It is a summary of the truth of God that every believer must know. It is knowing about God. Third, is the life-giving benefits that flow from the Gospel (2 Tim 1:10). This is the Lord's Prayer or the Life. It is about relationship with and experience of God. It is knowing God. Fourth, is the way of living that conforms to sound doctrine (Titus 2:1-15). This is the Decalogue or the Way. It is about behaviour and right living. It is living for God.

This outline provides a good foundation for this project's catechism, however it needs to be re-ordered to fit the Pentecostal perspective.<sup>58</sup> First is the Gospel, the Grand Biblical Narrative.<sup>59</sup> Second is the Lord's Prayer as the believer focuses on his or her relationship with God. For Pentecostals this relational and experiential aspect is important. When one has a personal relationship with God, they are more receptive to learning about Him. This knowledge then has a tangible place to land, which will make it more practical. Third is the Creed and as noted above, this intellectual knowledge of God is added to the relational knowledge of God which deepens the relationship. Fourth is the Decalogue, which focuses on God's love and his holiness. God has called us to love Him and others and this is a high standard. The idea behind this order is that once Christians are connected God with their heart (Life) and mind (Truth), they will be motivated to love God with their hands (Way). For a believer's hands to be activated by God's truth it must come through the head and hands which the Spirit uses to urge the Christian onto good works. The extra blessing from this is that acting upon God's word also helps cement the belief into the heart of the Christian.

#### *Who are the teachers?*

In the Old Testament a teacher's goal was the student's obedience to walk in the way of the Lord. This was done through oral instruction and example. The primary teachers were parents (chiefly fathers) and other teachers who rose up from within the believing community (i.e. priests, sages, prophets, and scribes) would be secondary. In their survey

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<sup>58</sup> See page 83.

<sup>59</sup> This is the first theme of this projects catechism and will be the theme that will be used in the discipleship groups to test for increase in theological comprehension.

of the New Testament, Parrett and Kang highlight that parents were expected to be the primary teachers of the young and because of Pentecost the gifts and responsibility of teaching had expanded beyond the few individuals as previously described in the Old Testament. The Spirit plays a crucial role in those called to teach and it is a serious responsibility within the Church. The authors argue that “those of us who are called to be teachers of the Gospel seek to live and minister in ways that are in line with the truth of the Gospel.”<sup>60</sup>

When it comes to the learners, the authors highlight the importance of teachers studying developmental theorists to better understand how people learn but they warn against using these theories as prescriptive for religious education; doing so may unintentionally limit the learner. One of the reasons for this warning is that these theories do not take into account the spiritual and the work of the Holy Spirit. In spite of these warnings, Parrett and Kang suggest that these theories help teachers understand that there is a natural developing that moves authority from the extrinsic to intrinsic. They promote a model of teaching that is teacher-learner focused in that they believe the students have something to bring to the task of learning. They shun the teacher as absolute authority and reveal that culture and context play a role in learning, thus the teacher needs to be consistently observing the culture of his or her students.

#### *How catechesis is done*

The authors desire “to provide a framework through which a holistic understanding of teaching may be conceptualized and practiced.”<sup>61</sup> They argue for a balance between

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<sup>60</sup> Parrett and Kang, *Teaching the Faith*, 177.

<sup>61</sup> Parrett and Kang, *Teaching the Faith*, 268.

process and content, particularly which aspect of the individual is being targeted. They believe that “all aspects of our humanity must be engaged, including our eyes and ears (perception), heads (cognition), hearts (affection), and hands and feet (behavior).”<sup>62</sup> The teacher will tend to lean toward one aspect over another and it is important to find balance since teaching is about wholeness. They also make a case for equal footing between intergenerational and age-segregated ministry. They believe the Church has swung too far toward age-segregated ministry and needs to correct itself. Overall Parrett and Kang provide a comprehensive Christian Education plan that begins with the pre-Christian, moves through baptism, membership and aims for long-term development that is beyond the scope of this study which will be focusing on the baptismal stage of pre-teens.

#### Augustine and the Catechumenate

The final book examined in regards to the design and methodology of a Pentecostal catechesis was William Harmless’ book, *Augustine and the Catechumenate*.<sup>63</sup> It was written as a response to the Catholic Church’s Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) which was revised in 1988 after only being introduced in 1972. He notes that the RCIA is silent about content and methodology which “divides catechists between those who opt for attitudes and practices of the recent past (i.e. a catechism-based curriculum, a lecture format, a cognitivist understanding of conversion) and those who opt for more contemporary attitudes and practices (i.e. a lectionary curriculum, a more experiential

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<sup>62</sup> Parrett and Kang, *Teaching the Faith*, 298.

<sup>63</sup> William J. Harmless, *Augustine and the Catechumenate* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1995).

focused or shared praxis format, a more affective or praxis view of conversion).”<sup>64</sup> This book is a case study of Augustine’s catechumenate in Hippo intended to “explore in detail what Augustine did with his baptismal candidates, what he said to them, and what his reflections on the experience were.”<sup>65</sup>

Harmless notes that there were some shifts in culture from the third century to the fourth century which impacted Augustine’s catechumenate due to a flood of new converts entered the Church. This flood made the previously intense pastoral care difficult and allowed the catechumens to get lost in the crowd and become anonymous. This lack of personal care resulted in many catechumens not passing to the baptism stage because of the Christian ethical rigor. This increase in catechumens being content to remain unbaptized led to a more distinct separation between ordinary catechumens not seeking baptism and those that were. There was quite a rigorous process of preparation developed for catechumens who were moving toward baptism. It included three elements: sacrificing worldly goods and pleasures with a special focus on alms giving; instruction given mainly from the creeds; and exorcisms because the world was demon possessed and Christians needed to be free from it. Yet all of this was no guarantee of success as Harmless points out: “In the fourth century, as in the third, the rigor of the process nor the quality of catechesis guaranteed results.”<sup>66</sup>

The RCIA divides the catechetical process into four parts and so Harmless examines the catechetical journey of Augustine in light of these parts: Evangelism, Catechumenate, Lent, and Mystagogy. It is the first two stages that are the most helpful

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<sup>64</sup> Harmless, *Augustine*, 24.

<sup>65</sup> Harmless, *Augustine*, 29.

<sup>66</sup> Harmless, *Augustine*, 73.

for this project. The Evangelizing stage was for inquirers who had not become Christians but were interested. Though this was meant for non-Christian inquirers, it was also valuable for correcting misinformation about the Gospel. This is a beneficial chapter to apply to the first stage of pre-teen catechesis with three goals: 1) Evangelizing, 2) Correcting misinformation about salvation, and 3) giving pre-teens a deeper understanding and assurance of salvation.

The second stage of the process was the catechumenate. During this stage Augustine utilized his position by using his basilica as his classroom. His approach was guided by the liturgy of the Church, while his textbook was the Bible. Augustine took the scriptures seriously and he believed that those teaching catechism must take scripture seriously for others and for himself/herself. There was no separate catechism class. Instead the catechumens met regularly together with the whole Church. The only part from which they were dismissed from was the Eucharist. Harmless desires that the reader understands how Augustine's sermon served as the catechism and though he would at times address the catechumens during these sermons, this was only one small part of their instruction. He preached in a way that everyone could understand and when a theological point came up that the unbaptized would not understand he would pause to address it in his message. Harmless points out that though Augustine used scripture as his guide in preaching, he did consistently address certain themes (i.e. Christology, Ecclesiology, Sacraments) through his preaching. He also used a variety of pedagogical tools and rhetorical techniques (i.e. review, current events, imagery, addressing those who "walked a little slower") to make his preaching more memorable.

Though Harmless' book is directed toward Catholics and the RCIA, Pentecostals are able to find principles that should be reflected in their catechism. He divides his findings into four aspects of the Word: the spoken word (rhetoric), the visible word (liturgy), the written word (scripture), and the incarnate word (Christ).

### *The Spoken Word (rhetoric)*

"Catechesis is an art, or more precisely, a performing art"<sup>67</sup> which needs to be honed through practice. Catechists must not only focus on what they say, but also on how to express it. "The art of rhetoric is the art of persuasion. And persuasion means convincing people's minds, stirring their hearts, and leading them to action."<sup>68</sup> This persuasion is relational, not intellectual and it is tied to the life of the catechizer.

### *The Visible Word: Liturgy*

The word "Liturgy" is not as pertinent for Pentecostals since the traditional Pentecostal Church (as a whole) does not have a liturgy and each church is autonomous in the way it runs its services. Yet Harmless does provide ideas from which one can glean. One particular notion that Harmless illuminates is the use of the sermon as catechesis. Though Pentecostals do not have a formal or official liturgy, they do lean toward an informal one, which usually includes a sermon. This aspect of the service, like in Augustine's day, can be used for catechetical purposes if used intentionally.

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<sup>67</sup> Harmless, *Augustine*, 349.

<sup>68</sup> Harmless, *Augustine*, 354.

### *The Written Word: Scripture*

As Harmless has already stated, scripture was of extreme importance in the catechetical process. Augustine taught the catechumens scripture in large quantities while giving them deep theological reflections. Harmless notes that Augustine's example gives a paradigm for teaching: scripture, interpretation, and creed. Augustine would alter his teaching depending on his location and demographic. This, suggests Harmless, shifts "the burden of reflection away from universal catechisms and toward local catechists, away from pre-packaged curricula and towards on-site discernment."<sup>69</sup> Therefore a catechism for Pentecostal pre-teens would also need to be adjusted depending on the location and their location and demographic.

### *The Word Incarnate: Christ*

According to Harmless, Christ was always the center of Augustine's catechism, though he would teach other themes in light of Christology. "For instance, he linked Christology to spirituality (Christ the inner teacher); to Trinity (Christ the eternal Word); to soteriology (Christ the ransomer of slaves, Christ the physician); to ecclesiology (Christ as head, Church as body); to ethical exhortation (welcoming Christ the foreigner; 'tattooing' the Cross of Christ on catechumens' foreheads)."<sup>70</sup> Christ is the unifying thread of catechesis and amidst all the nuances of the various catechisms available, it is He who keeps the Church on the correct path.

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<sup>69</sup> Harmless, *Augustine*, 373.

<sup>70</sup> Harmless, *Augustine*, 377.

## Contemporary Praxis

The previous resources have illustrated the design and methodology of catechesis from a biblical and historical perspective. The next three resources will explore educational practices, youth ministry, and family ministry in the present. It is necessary to connect the past with the present in order to develop a more full and contemporary Pentecostal catechesis.

### Educational Practices

In his book, *The Art and Science of Teaching*,<sup>71</sup> Robert Marzano argues that “the most influential component of an effective school is the individual teachers within that school.”<sup>72</sup> He believes that the research shows that effective teachers make a significant difference in student achievement and learning. It is easy to make the leap to teaching catechism and suggest that to make the most significant difference in religious training and educating with catechism, the teachers need to be effective and to be effective they need to understand the best teaching practices available to teachers, religious and non-religious. In Marzano’s book on teaching practices he examines a number of principles that aid the teacher in becoming an effective educator.

Firstly, Marzano posits that to be most effective one must start at the end by developing an end goal and use ongoing assessment to track progress and celebrate growth. He believes that by setting clear goals at the beginning this establishes an initial target which can enhance learning. He argues for two types of assessment: 1) formative

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<sup>71</sup> Robert J. Marzano, *The Art and Science of Teaching: A Comprehensive Framework for Effective Instruction* (Alexandria, VA: ASCD, 2007).

<sup>72</sup> Marzano, *Art and Science of Teaching*, 1.

(during the learning experience) and 2) summative (after the learning experience).

According to the research that Marzano presents, formative assessment is a more effective and powerful tool in student learning. The more frequently that formative assessment is used, the more academic achievement is observed. This allows students to celebrate their success more often. Celebrating success is also proven to increase learning because students are able to see the correlation of their work to their learning and they are able to see their improvement over time.

Secondly Marzano explores how to help students effectively interact with new information. To help students have an understanding of the new information being presented to them and accomplish the learning goals set out at the beginning, teachers need to “facilitate students actively processing the content.”<sup>73</sup> When students are actively processing they are interacting with the content, the teacher, and other students in order to construct meaning. To encourage greatest learning, students must not be passively listening; rather they should be actively, developing meaning of the material. The teacher’s role in this process, according to Marzano, is to organize and present the information in the best way for student understanding which according to his research is visual instruction followed by dramatic and then verbal instruction. Narratives and stories are best because it involves both visual and dramatic.

Thirdly, Marzano reflects on helping students practice and deepen their understanding of new knowledge. He argues that actively processing information is just the beginning of the learning process for students. To better understand the next steps, teachers need to be aware that there are two types of knowledge that could be introduced

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<sup>73</sup> Marzano, *Art and Science of Teaching*, 29.

to students. He labels the first type of knowledge as procedural knowledge which needs practice to improve. These could be steps on how to improve writing, spelling, math, etc. Marzano labels the second type of knowledge as declarative knowledge, which can be understood as information. He believes that a new awareness of knowledge is forged through repeated exposure, through which there is a gradual increase and addition of knowledge that links to the old knowledge. If this assimilation is not possible—new knowledge challenges old knowledge—then students must restructure or re-organize their knowledge in such a way that it might produce new insights.

Fourthly, in order to restructure old knowledge with new contradictory knowledge students need to learn how to experiment with new knowledge. According to Marzano, there are four types of hypothesis-generation and testing tasks:<sup>74</sup> experimental inquiry, problem solving, decision making, and investigation. Marzano believes that “the starting point for learning should be a problem, a query, or a puzzle that the learner wishes to solve.”<sup>75</sup> This concept of problem-based learning makes sense since people are more motivated to learn when there is, at least, the perception that the learning or discovery will solve a problem. He also argues that contemporary research shows that problem-based learning is better at helping students understand principles than it is at helping students apply the knowledge in new situations. In catechism problem-based learning can be utilized in helping pre-teens express and explore doubts they have about God.

Fifthly, Marzano explores ways in which a teacher can establish and maintain classroom rules and procedures. According to Marzano, rules and procedures are needed

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<sup>74</sup> Keep in mind that students must be at the cognitive developmental stage of being able to hypothesize, at least concrete operational but more desirable would be formal operational thought

<sup>75</sup> Marzano, *Art and Science of Teaching*, 87.

for effective teaching to be possible. Do they have a place in catechism? Maybe it would be more like expectations of participation? He found that when rules and procedures were established at home there was an increase in academic achievement and a decrease in disruptive behavior at school. This is an important finding for catechism because it relates to the importance of home life in learning and the need for collaboration between Church and home. He also notes that there is evidence that rules and procedures work better if the students have input into their creation.

Sixthly, Marzano believes that the student-teacher relationship is crucial in teaching. He claims that if “the relationship between the teacher and the students is good, then everything else that occurs in the classroom seems to be enhanced.”<sup>76</sup> He highlights two dynamics in the teacher-student relationship. Marzano describes the first dynamic as “dominance” which is about clarity of purpose and strong guidance. This involves “emotional distance from the ups and downs of classroom life and not taking students’ outbursts or even students’ direct acts of disobedience personally.”<sup>77</sup> The second dynamic of “co-operation” means that the teacher demonstrates care for students as individual while developing a sense of community. Teacher behavior is key in classroom management, which in turn will affect teaching effectiveness. This second dynamic is reflective of Wyckoff’s Holy Spirit as facilitator<sup>78</sup> and though both dynamics need to be present in Pentecostal catechesis, this project leans more toward the co-operation dynamic.

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<sup>76</sup> Marzano, *Art and Science of Teaching*, 150.

<sup>77</sup> Marzano, *Art and Science of Teaching*, 152.

<sup>78</sup> See page 78.

Finally, Marzano uses recent research to illustrate the fact that a teacher's expectation of a student is significant in that student's learning. He argues that how a teacher feels about a student will affect how that teacher behaves toward the student, which in affect achievement or learning. He also posits that it is not enough for teachers to simply change their expectations of students, they must also change their behavior which comes with those low expectations. He highlights two categories of teacher behavior that impacts a student's learning. Marzano names the first behavior "affective tone" which is accomplished by the teacher setting a classroom of positive emotions. He contends that high expectancy creates a more positive tone. The second behavior is regarding the quality of interactions with the students. His argument is that teachers will pursue more with students that they have a high expectancy of.

### Youth Ministry

Kenda Creasy Dean's book, *Almost Christian*, addresses this issue: "American young people are, theoretically, fine with religious faith—but it does not concern them very much, and it is not durable enough to survive long after they graduate from high school."<sup>79</sup> She argues that this is because the adults in the Church have effectively handed down a type of Christianity that is irrelevant. She suggests that the solution lies "in modeling the kind of mature, passionate faith we say we want young people to have."<sup>80</sup> Like Marzano, Dean believes that it is important to begin with the end in mind, "What kind of faith does the Church want its young people to have?"

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<sup>79</sup> Kenda Creasy Dean, *Almost Christian: What the Faith of our Teenagers is Telling the American Church* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 3.

<sup>80</sup> Dean, *Almost Christian*, 4.

She theorizes that the Church has become irrelevant to the young because it no longer addresses real life: the story of “God’s suffering love through salvation history and especially through Christ’s death and resurrection, and of God’s continued involvement in the world through the Holy Spirit—has been muted in many congregations.”<sup>81</sup> Young people want a faith that is real and connects to the world they live in, a world of pain, love, tears, laughter. This type of catechesis of helping pre-teens become aware of how their life truly connects with God’s grand biblical narrative is paramount.

Another area that catechesis needs to address is the lack of faith vocabulary amongst teens. Dean notes that in the interviews for the National Survey of Youth and Religion (NSYR) they met many “young people who called themselves Christians, who grew up with Christian parents, who were regular participants in Christian congregations, yet who had no readily accessible faith vocabulary, few recognizable faith practices, and little ability to reflect on their lives religiously.”<sup>82</sup> Catechesis must address these issues, in particular, the trend of young people who “lack a theological language with which to express their faith or interpret their experience of the world.”<sup>83</sup>

Dean argues that it is not because young people are not able to comprehend or use such language; it is that “no one has taught them how to talk about their faith, or provided opportunities to practice using a faith vocabulary.”<sup>84</sup> This is what catechesis does. It is a place where Christians, young and old, can learn to discuss faith at a deeper more meaningful level and it allows for higher-level thinking. It allows the older generation to

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<sup>81</sup> Dean, *Almost Christian*, 11.

<sup>82</sup> Dean, *Almost Christian*, 16.

<sup>83</sup> Dean, *Almost Christian*, 18.

<sup>84</sup> Dean, *Almost Christian*, 19.

pass on a more substantive faith while giving the younger generation a meaningful language to grasp and express their faith.

In her study, Dean discovered that “for highly devoted young people, faith is a big deal. They ‘own’ their traditions, possess articulate and integrated theologies, and draw significantly from their religions’ faith stories to influence their decisions, actions, and attitudes.”<sup>85</sup> She explores the world of Mormon teenagers who scored the highest for highly devoted teens. She notes, from her research, that the Mormon Church provides many opportunities for Mormon children and teens to practice sharing their faith and developing their spiritual language. Though the Mormon teenagers scored the highest for religious devotion, it is important to recognize that this is not necessarily equated to spiritual maturity. Dean recognizes this and reminds her readers that “the delusion that human effort can generate mature faith-in young people or anyone else—is as old as fiction itself...Christians believe that faith depends on the electrifying presence of the Holy Spirit, who gives cultural tools their holy momentum.”<sup>86</sup> This rings especially true for Pentecostals who believe that the Holy Spirit has an important role of empowerment when it comes to interpreting, understanding, and living out Scripture. Dean argues that it is catechesis that gives teenagers these cultural tools which the Holy Spirit can use to bring about mature faith. This is the intangible that Wyckoff mentions in his book and is crucial for faith development.

Dean notes that four theological threads were found in highly devoted teens: a creed to believe, a community to belong to, a call to live out, and a hope to hold onto. It is the creed that catechesis touches on the most. A holistic catechism will also affect each of

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<sup>85</sup> Dean, *Almost Christian*, 47.

<sup>86</sup> Dean, *Almost Christian*, 62.

the other categories as well. Dean notes that it is easy to see why teenagers have trouble differentiating the beliefs of the Church from that of culture since many congregations struggle with this as well. Parents are given the responsibility of translating the faith for the next generation by living it out daily with them in everyday life. Yet if they also struggle with what their creed is, then it will be even more difficult for their children to grasp it. This struggle can be summed up in this question: “How do we translate our faith with conviction when we are not always convinced ourselves?”<sup>87</sup>

In part, the solution for this struggle is found in fostering a bilingual faith within the Church and the home. What Dean suggests by bilingual faith is that Christians need to be “conversant in both the traditions of the Church and the narratives of the dominant culture.”<sup>88</sup> Catechesis is concerned with both of these in that the catechizer needs to be bilingual and fluent in both so that he or she is able to create a space for young believers to instantly connect to the Church, while gradually building the faith vocabulary of Christians. Dean posits that adults (parents in particular) are to model faith and do not need to be experts in the faith, rather genuine examples are what truly hold weight. Teenagers must first be approached with the love of God, before they hear the truth He is calling them to. Love meets teenagers where they are at, but it does not allow them to stay there. Therefore, a Pentecostal catechism begins with the Lord’s Prayer because it begins with one’s connection and dependence upon “Abba” Father.

Catechesis flourishes in a place where both young and old alike have been granted space to tell their story. It is less about what God has done in the past and more about where they are observing God in the here and now. According to Dean few teenagers

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<sup>87</sup> Dean, *Almost Christian*, 112.

<sup>88</sup> Dean, *Almost Christian*, 120.

have the opportunity “to eavesdrop on the grammar, vocabularies, habits, virtues, or practices of mature Christian adults.”<sup>89</sup> Catechesis must be the place for this or at the very least a catalyst for the Church and families to begin providing these opportunities.

### Family Ministry

Although Joiner’s book, *Think Orange*, is more of a personal reflection on ministry rather than one based on academic research, it does provide this project with some valuable principles and tools for developing a pre-teen catechism that partners with the Church and families.

Joiner argues strongly for the Church and home to join forces in the faith development of young people. He believes that some think the Church is solely responsible for the Christian education of its young—to the exclusion of the family—while others believe that the family is more important than the Church. He posits that there is great benefit for the two to learn to work in sync with each other.

To help the reader better understand how the two can work together, Joiner first examines each one on its own. The first part of the equation is the Church’s role and Joiner states that “the Church is uniquely and strategically placed on this planet to display God’s glory to the world.”<sup>90</sup> Meaning that the Church is to shine the light of God into the darkness of the world, which is why he assigns the color yellow to the Church. He posits that the Church has not been effective in shining this light and that is one of the reasons why people have stopped looking to the Church for answers and guidance. He believes

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<sup>89</sup> Dean, *Almost Christian*, 151.

<sup>90</sup> Reggie Joiner, *Think Orange: Imagine the Impact When Church and Family Collide* (Colorado Springs: David C. Cook, 2009), 29.

churches have an identity problem and “have forgotten who we are and what we are supposed to be showing the world.”<sup>91</sup> For Joiner, relationship with God is paramount because it is the source of God’s light that is to shine on the world: “When there is no light for the next generation to see God, they will be disillusioned with a flawed church and underwhelmed by shallow faith.”<sup>92</sup> It is the responsibility of the older generation to show the younger generation Jesus, through their relationship with Him. This will help the younger generation understand who they are and impact their relationship with Christ.

The second part to the equation is the family. Joiner identifies the family with the color red, when mixed with yellow (the Church) makes orange; hence *Think Orange*. “Parents have a role that is as critical as the Church’s role when it comes to influencing the next generation...(they are) to love and demonstrate God’s character through an unconditional relationship.”<sup>93</sup> Joiner suggests that the family is God’s primary means of sharing His love from generation to generation. His desire is to see each generation surpass the one before. A parent’s role is to “impress on their children the love and character of God”<sup>94</sup> in such a way that their children start off where their parents end off.

In order to understand how these two work together, Joiner has developed five family values from Deut 6:1-4. The first value is that parents and churches need to have the end in mind. Joiner reminds the Church and parents that the *Shema* “establishes God as the central character of a story that connects every generation, every family, and every individual to God’s goodness.”<sup>95</sup> The end goal is that young people would be consistently

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<sup>91</sup> Joiner, *Think Orange*, 32.

<sup>92</sup> Joiner, *Think Orange*, 39.

<sup>93</sup> Joiner, *Think Orange*, 44.

<sup>94</sup> Joiner, *Think Orange*, 48.

<sup>95</sup> Joiner, *Think Orange*, 54.

reminded of what really matters: God. It is important to “make a conscious effort to remind ourselves that there is a bigger story, and God is at the center of it.”<sup>96</sup> This is consistent with the Marzano’s first educational principle discussed previously that it is important to begin with an end goal in mind. It is important in all teaching—education and spiritual—that the end goal is defined before one begins the journey. If there is no destination how can one know if they are heading in the right direction.

The second family value that Joiner develops is that parents and churches need to fight for the heart. He argues that through this verse Moses is illustrating that faith in God is internal and Joiner believes that in order “to pass on a legacy to the next generation, it has to be transferred relationally.”<sup>97</sup> Thus, the context for effectively passing down the faith from one generation to the next is through relationship. It is more than merely helping the next generation obey the commands of the LORD, but more so that they would have a love relationship with God which would translate into obedience.

The third family value is about making it personal. Joiner points out that Moses is trying to help the Israelites to understand that in order to pass these commands on to the next generation they must already be in the hearts of the parents. “In a ministry where the target is to pass a personal faith along to children, one of the priorities should be to convince parents to make faith personal in their own lives.”<sup>98</sup> Joiner challenges parents to be a spiritual model for their children. They need to make their faith personal and allow their children to see them live it out as a priority.

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<sup>96</sup> Joiner, *Think Orange*, 55.

<sup>97</sup> Joiner, *Think Orange*, 58.

<sup>98</sup> Joiner, *Think Orange*, 62.

The fourth family value that Joiner develops is about creating a rhythm in the home. Joiner argues that Moses recognized the need to make faith a part of everyday life. He knew the danger of compartmentalizing faith into only one aspect of life. Joiner contends that Moses is promoting a systematic model of teaching through the family, particularly through routines that parents intentionally develop and consistently apply. These routines that Joiner develops from Deut. 6 are: Eating meals together, walking or traveling together, tucking children into bed, getting up in the morning.

The last family value that Joiner takes from Deut 6 is that parents need to widen a child's circle of influence beyond the family. He argues that Moses was clearly addressing the whole nation regarding the teaching of faith to the younger generations. At the core of this value is the belief that young people need other voices besides their parents in their lives and "in a culture where community is not automatic and role models are limited, parents should become intentional about finding spiritual leaders and mentors for their kids."<sup>99</sup> The key is that parents find other voices, that their children respect, who are saying the same things as they are.

Joiner desires that churches and families would learn to work together in developing faith in the younger generation. This is not meant to be another program but a set of principles that act as a filter used "to create and evaluate what you do to influence children and teenagers."<sup>100</sup> This needs to be a core value of any catechesis in the Church. It is not a church program, but more like an add-on. This is equivalent to web browsers that have add-ons to help them perform different functions they are not able to do on their own. A catechetical discipleship model is not meant to take over the entire children or

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<sup>99</sup> Joiner, *Think Orange*, 70.

<sup>100</sup> Joiner, *Think Orange*, 83.

youth programs, rather it is meant to be an additive that strengthens the program already in place. It is the same with families. Integrating catechesis into one's family life is not meant to add another program to do at home, rather it is meant to work with the rhythm of the family that is already in place or that is being intentionally developed.

If the strength of Joiner's work is in his emphasis on relationship in the partnership between families and the Church, its weakness is in its lack of connecting faith with doctrine. He argues strongly for showing and modeling faith to the next generation, but not much emphasis is given to the teaching of right doctrine; it is mostly focused on right living. This modeling is an important part of catechesis and so is the passing on of truth. An effective catechism will not only partner families with the Church but will also partner modeling a right relationship with Christ and instruction in right belief.

### **Summary of Literature Review**

#### **Summary of Hermeneutical Context**

It is clear from Wyckoff that the Holy Spirit plays a crucial, yet intangible role in the Pentecostal catechetical process. His model—teacher as facilitator—is used to best understand the role of the Spirit and the teacher in Pentecostal hermeneutics and is helpful for Pentecostal catechesis. It should be expected that catechumens will be able to use their natural abilities to grow in their cognitive understanding of God but it is through the Holy Spirit that they gain a deeper experiential knowledge of Him. The Holy Spirit will illuminate God's truth to students beyond what the teacher can teach or the student can naturally learn. Thus not all outcomes can be foreseen or measured. A Pentecostal

catechesis must allow room for the Holy Spirit to speak and provide opportunity for students to express this supernatural learning.

### Summary of Design and Methodology

From the five books examined for catechetical design and methodology there are some practical thoughts that can be applied to a Pentecostal catechesis. A repeated theme found throughout the literature was that catechesis seems to be tied to church health. Many of the authors discovered that when the Church was healthy there was evidence of a robust catechetical ministry occurring. There is no direct correlation between church health and catechesis. However, this research illustrates that when the Church is in a healthy state, a vigorous ministry of catechesis is evident.

It is also evident through this research, that a Pentecostal catechism should reflect the historical and biblical image of the Church, consisting of three main pillars: The Lord's Prayer, the Creeds, and the Decalogue. The Lord's Prayer is about one's relationship with God and connecting that relationship to everyday life. The Creeds represent knowledge about God and discovering ways to experience this knowledge. The Decalogue is concerned with connecting the previous two pillars to one's life through right behaviour. One's relationship with God, strengthened by a growing experiential and intellectual knowledge of God, should lead one to wanting to live rightly for God. Christ must be at the center of it all and to ensure that He is, a Pentecostal catechism must begin with the gospel to provide a foundation. The three legged stool motif must be expanded to include God's grand biblical narrative—creation, the fall, redemption, restoration—which represents the wood with which the stool is made.

Like the Pentecostal message this catechism must be contextualized as Augustine contextualized his to demographic and geography. A Pentecostal catechism must connect the life of the believer to God's word in a real and tangible way. As the previous authors argue, it must initiate or socialize young Christian believers for living in the kingdom of God; it must give them their identity as Christians.

### Summary of Contemporary Praxis

All three of the books examined concerning contemporary praxis agree that it is important to begin with an end goal in mind. One does not usually associate developing learning outcomes for faith development, but that is the case here. Marzano emphasizes the importance of developing an end goal and celebrating with students as they move toward it. Dean argues that Church should decide what kind of faith it wants its young people to have. Joiner calls the family and the Church to work together to define what the end goal is and how they are going to get there.

The three authors also agree that for effective teaching to occur there must be co-operation between the learning environment and the home. Marzano argues for parent commitment to the learning expectations for their children. Dean believes that parents need to work with the Church in helping their youth build a theological vocabulary. Joiner argues that the Church and the home need to be united in faith development. Catechesis needs to be a place of partnership between parents and the Church. A place for the older generation to relationally pass down the Faith to the younger generation.

Marzano's focus on problem-based learning to help children accommodate new contradicting knowledge is helpful for catechesis because it provides a method for pre-

teens to explore doubts and be okay to have disequilibrium in their belief systems. Knowing that it is okay to have doubts and having a place to work through these doubts gives pre-teens a strong chance of developing a deep faith.

Dean's focus on the need for bilingual Christians helps to develop a Pentecostal catechesis by illustrating the importance of developing a catechism that is taught with the language of today's culture but moves pre-teens to a deeper theological knowledge and understanding of their faith. This type of catechesis helps pre-teens connect to God's grand biblical story in a way they can understand while helping them develop a deep theological vocabulary. This catechesis must be a place for pre-teens to use and express their new language with others (i.e. parents, church members) who already know it.

Finally, Joiner's reminder that young Christians need older Christians to guide them on their journey reaffirms the biblical principle of passing on the faith in Deuteronomy 6; it is an intergenerational journey. Catechesis is necessary because it broadens the circle of influence for pre-teens. It allows them to observe and dialogue with believers who are further ahead in the journey than they are. As Joiner encourages parents to widen the circle of influence for their teenagers, catechesis is an opportunity that the Church can provide that does exactly that.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### PROJECT DESIGN

#### Introduction

*D3: Disciples Digging Deeper* is a three-year catechetical discipleship program for youth in grades six to eight. It consists of five phases which are outlined as follows: 1) God's grand Biblical narrative, 2) The Lord's Prayer, 3) The Creeds, 4) The Decalogue, and 5) The Sacraments. The first phase explores how pre-teens can connect their lives with God's grand biblical narrative of creation, the fall, redemption, and restoration. This phase was the test piece used to give feedback on the value of catechesis and whether it is helpful for increasing theological comprehension in Pentecostal pre-teens. The second phase of the catechism examines the Lord's Prayer and how it relates to a pre-teen's relationship with God. This phase is more experiential than the others and is designed to help students to gain a greater appreciation and confidence in their relationship with God. The third phase of the catechism explores the Creeds in order to increase the student's knowledge and understanding of who God is. It is a basic introduction to Christian theology, providing a foundation for the student's continued learning in the Church. The fourth stage explores the Decalogue in order to help students understand that following Christ requires obedience. Application of what they are learning will play a large role in this phase of the catechism. The fifth and final stage consists of teaching about the Eucharist and Baptism. Even though the PAOC is not a sacramental fellowship it is beneficial for Pentecostals to understand the significance and value that the Eucharist and Baptism have for the Christian life. If the student has not already been baptized, then this

would be in preparation for baptism. Most likely the student will have already experienced the Eucharist since there are no requirements beyond salvation, in the PAOC, to participate. This means the teaching on the Eucharist would deepen the student's understanding and help them to see its application in their own life. These phases are meant to occur twice a year, once in Autumn and once in the Spring. The first two phases would take place during a student's grade six year. The third phase would be divided into two segments and occur during the student's grade seven year. The last two phases would take place during the student's grade eight year and would culminate at Easter with baptism.

For this project specifically, *D3: Disciples Digging Deeper* phase one was developed into a four-week catechetical discipleship class available for any Christian student in grades six to eight. This program was used for two case studies that took place in two separate locations. The first location was Christian Life Community Church (CLCC) in Abbotsford, British Columbia. The second location was in a neighbouring church, Abbotsford Pentecostal Assembly (APA), also in Abbotsford. Both of these churches are part of the PAOC and each location had unique elements which affected the implementation of the program. These differences are discussed separately in the "implementation of the program" section of this chapter. This chapter will outline the objectives of the catechism, its design, the implementation of the program, the theological comprehension assessment tools used, and a reflection on the project.

## Objectives

1. To help pre-teens connect their lives to God's Grand Biblical Narrative: Creation, the Fall, Redemption, and Restoration.
2. To give pre-teens a theological language with which to express their faith.
3. To enable pre-teens to gain a deeper understanding of their faith

## Design

The *D3: Disciples Digging Deeper* program is divided into four themes which correlated with the four-week program length. The main learning goal for the full four weeks is that students will be able to connect their lives to God's Grand Biblical Narrative (Creation, the Fall, Redemption, Restoration). Each weekly lesson consists of five sections. Section one is meant to engage the learner with the topic. This is done through pre-lesson conversation<sup>1</sup> and explanation of the main learning goal and sub-learning goal for that lesson by the instructor.

The second and third sections of the program are teacher guided and student participatory. They are designed to explore the concept with the students and explain the concept using inquiry. This is accomplished by brainstorming the students' background knowledge on a whiteboard. The purpose of this is two-fold: 1) it provides the teacher with the level of understanding the students possess and 2) it provides the teacher with the knowledge of what misinformation students have concerning the subject. This allows the teacher to deepen one's knowledge as well as correct misinformation already learned. This brainstorming lends itself to the relational aspect of knowledge. It is used to move the students into the inquiry section of the lesson. The questions used in this section were

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<sup>1</sup> See page 123 for a good example of how this can work.

derived from *Concerning the Faith*<sup>2</sup> which is as close to a catechism that Pentecostals get. Though the questions were designed to bring the students to a certain understanding of knowledge it is also recognized that during this questioning the Holy Spirit may take the conversation in a different direction. The crucial factor is that the teacher remain focused on the main goal of connecting the student's life to God's grand biblical narrative (whichever theme is the focus at that time).

The fourth section elaborates on the concept being discussed that week by learning theological vocabulary that is connected to the theme. (e.g. sin is one of the vocabulary words when discussing the Fall of mankind). The final section is not a teaching moment; rather it is a time to explain the home application for that week. The home application is meant to connect what is being learned during the lesson with home. This part of the lesson is designed to be optional and is meant to foster spiritual discussion at home.

Although each lesson has the same basic outline, each week focuses on a separate theme that, together, make up God's grand biblical narrative. The first lesson explores God's creation of the world and attempts to help the student to connect his or her life to the creation event. The goal is to help students understand that because they are created in God's image they are His revelation to the world around them. The second lesson explores the effects of Adam and Eve's sin on humanity and attempts to help students connect their lives to this event. The goal is to help them see the negative affects of sin in their own life and the lives of others in order to help them see that they need someone to save them from this sin. The third lesson explores God's plan of redemption of mankind

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<sup>2</sup> In the 1950s the National office of the PAOC commissioned Dr. J. E. Purdie to develop a teaching tool called *Concerning the Faith* which was meant to act as a catechism of sorts, but is not in use today.

through Jesus Christ and attempts to help students connect God's redemption to their lives through salvation. The goal is to help students recognize that salvation is a journey that begins when they decide to believe in Jesus and it continues throughout their whole lives. The fourth lesson explores God's restoration of the world at the end of time and attempts to help students connect their present lives with the future reality of Christ's return. The goal is to instill hope and a desire to share this hope with the world around them.

### **Implementation**

The first group in which *D3: Disciples Digging Deeper* was implemented in, consisted of six pre-teens from Christian Life Community Church (CLCC) in Abbotsford, British Columbia. The group was comprised of five females and one male, ranging from the ages of 11-14. This first group met on Friday nights from October 2, 2015 through October 25, 2015. They met at the church building, one hour before the weekly youth program. The duration of each lesson was from sixty to seventy minutes depending on the amount of discussion that took place during the lesson. Two methods of recruitment were utilized in order to find students who would be interested in participating *D3: Disciples Digging Deeper* at CLCC. First, the Middle School Pastor and Children's Ministry Pastor emailed all the parents of students in grade six to eight. Second, a postcard handout was developed and handed out during CLCC's fall kick-off Sunday.

The second group of pre-teens to participate in the *D3: Disciples Digging Deeper* catechism were from Abbotsford Pentecostal Assembly (APA) in Abbotsford, British Columbia. This group consisted of six pre-teens as well, four females and two males,

ranging from eleven to thirteen years old. They met on Sunday mornings right after the main church service. This was their normal time of gathering for “Learning Communities” (a.k.a Sunday School). Each lesson was limited to between thirty and forty minutes because of a few factors. The group could not begin until the main service was over. This caused one of the meetings to be shortened due to the main worship service going longer than its schedule time. Another factor was the length of the adult learning community that the pre-teens’ parents attended. These learning communities took place from October 4, 2015 through November 1, 2015<sup>3</sup> and were scheduled to begin at 11:20am and end at 12:00pm. The youth pastor felt that this time slot would be the best option to garner the most buy in from his pre-teens and parents.<sup>4</sup> In order to make parents and pre-teens aware of the program the youth pastor made an announcement in church, to the pre-teens, and to parents three weeks previous to the program.

### **Assessment Instruments**

This test project consists of a pre-test and post-test. The pre-test was designed to get a base line of theological knowledge and comprehension regarding each participant. It was comprised of five sections. First was the biographical information which was gathered for comparison purposes. For example, gathering information on if there was a difference in theological growth between pre-teens whose parents are Christians and attend church compared to pre-teens whose parents are not Christians and do not attend church. The second section of the pre-test was comprised of a vocabulary check sheet. The basic idea

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<sup>3</sup> The researcher was out of town on October 25, 2015 so that lesson was deferred until the next week.

<sup>4</sup> As noted in page 138 this is not the preferable method of recruiting for *D3: Disciples Digging Deeper* because it does not foster commitment. It was the wishes of the youth pastor to recruit this way as he felt this would be the best time to get pre-teens out.

behind this section is to ascertain what theological language was familiar to students and what is not. It will also be interesting to see if any of the private Christian school pre-teens score higher on this section than the public school teens. The third section of the pre-test elevates the level of understanding to ascertain whether the pre-teens know the definition of each word. The fourth section is made up of biblical scenarios to see if the pre-teens are able to recognize the concepts when the terms are not explicitly evident. The final section of the pre-test consists of personal responses to gauge the level of confidence the pre-teens have regarding their faith which will provide a baseline from which it can be determined whether their participation in the four-week catechesis has affected their faith journey.

The post-test was designed to measure how far the pre-teens have developed from their base line. It consists of four sections—the biographical section is absent—which assess whether the pre-teens have improved in their remembering and comprehension of some basic theological terms. These terms are meant to give the pre-teens a foundation with which they can begin to understand their faith at a deeper level and feel more confident and comfortable sharing it with others. This was done through the main learning goal and its four sub-goals which are described above. The first section is made up of vocabulary sentences which are meant to gauge the pre-teens understanding of the vocabulary terms learned during the four weeks. This is compared to the vocabulary knowledge sheet in the pre-test in which the pre-teens indicated their level of familiarity with the terms. It will be interesting to note which words they indicated familiarity and whether this translated to being able to use them in sentences. This might show that their self-awareness when it comes to theological language might be lacking. The second

section of the post-test is the same vocabulary matching test from the pre-test. This is to assess whether there has been a growth in their remembering of the vocabulary definitions. The third section of the post-test is a reiteration of the scenarios using portions of scripture. This is to assess whether there has been a growth in their comprehension of the theological terms. The final section is the personal response part of the post-test and is meant to gauge whether their confidence with their faith has improved. It is also meant as an assessment of the four-week program from the pre-teens' perspective. It is meant to ascertain what they enjoyed, what they did not, how can it be made better, and would they do something like this again. This is to help determine the viability of such a program with pre-teens.

### **Project Reflections**

The project's researcher acted as the teacher for both pre-teen groups which made it awkward at the beginning as there was little or no relationship prior to the *D3: Disciples Digging Deeper* program. Gradually as relationship was established this awkwardness dissolved and the group became more comfortable with each other and the teacher.

The first lesson at each location began with an explanation of God's grand biblical narrative, which was made up of four seasons: Creation, The Fall, Redemption, and Restoration. It was explained that each week the group would explore a new season. The first lesson explored creation and the students brainstormed all the ideas they could think about concerning the story of creation. This was done for two reasons: 1) it familiarized the teacher with the students' level of background knowledge on creation, and 2) it provided a jumping off point into the biblical explanation of creation. Following

the brainstorming session, the teacher led the students in a progressive set of questions that was intended to lead the student to a fuller understanding of creation as well as fulfill the weekly learning goal: “I am able to connect my life with God’s creation of the world.” Though the lesson was planned out in a progressive manner, meaning each question would lead the student closer to the goal, room was made for the work of the Holy Spirit and the teacher allowed for questions and doubts that God had been stirring in the students.

During the vocabulary part of the lesson the students wrote down the definition of the vocabulary words that were provided and they wrote a sentence for each vocabulary word. Unfortunately, there was not enough time to complete this task and share the results with each other. This was an unfortunate result of only having an hour with the students. This was also the case at APA which only had thirty-five minutes. In hindsight this program would be more effective if each lesson was lengthened to two weeks instead of one.

The final aspect of the lesson was the home application portion. It was explained to the students that the “Home App” was optional and meant to engage their parents in the learning process as well. This week the students were given two questions to ask their parents: “When did you become a Christian?” and “Why did you become a Christian?”

One main difference between the two case study groups was that the CLCC group brought their bibles with them while the APA group did not. This affected how the lesson was presented since one group was able to actively engage in examining the scriptures while the APA group tended to be more passive.

The second week of the catechesis class at both locations was much more interactive than the first week; there was considerably more dialogue amongst the students in both groups because relationships had been established. The CLCC group began with a spontaneous discussion on Star Wars as the group tried to educate one member on the characters of Star Wars. This discussion provided a natural segue into the lesson discussion for that week, the Fall of humanity into sin. As the students discussed the transformation of Anakin Skywalker to Darth Vader the instructor was able to help connect this topic to the fall of man by illustrating how this transition reflected sin. Not only did this help the students connect better with the topic it also helped them engage more since their interest was peaked from the beginning.

This lesson began with brainstorming ideas about the Fall of Adam and Eve into sin. This was a positive exercise because it not only engaged the student with their own background knowledge but it also allowed the teacher to bring correction of misinformation as well. It was quite interesting to hear the many ideas about the serpent, Adam and Eve, and what happened after they sinned.<sup>5</sup>

The explanation section of the lesson, similar to the previous lesson, used questions to guide the students toward the lesson goal: “I am able to connect my life with the fall of man into sin.” There was room given for students to both question and doubt. One question in particular stood out, “why would God create us the way he wanted us and then create the tree that would wreck all that?” They were intrigued by a world without sin. It was evident in both groups that the students struggled with a God who would put the tree in the garden.

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<sup>5</sup> One specific example was a young girl who explained that the fruit was apple brains that gave Adam and Eve special knowledge.

Since there was no pre-test this week the groups were able to move onto the vocabulary section earlier. They were asked to write what they believed each word meant. They were then provided with the definition and asked to compare this definition with what they had written previously. For the Home Application the students were encouraged to watch or read two news events with their parents and discuss the effects of the fall they observed in these events. It was also suggested that they examine the TV shows they regularly watch through this lens as well.

The third lesson focused on God's restoration of mankind through Jesus Christ and began with a review of the vocabulary from the previous two weeks. It was interesting to see what vocabulary the students retained and what they did not. This was helpful because it showed what areas of theology that were still unclear for the pre-teens. One of the weaknesses of this lesson was the reality that there is so much information that could be discussed regarding Christ's work of salvation that it was difficult to determine what to include. The big idea of the week was helpful in this regard as the students attempted to connect their life to God's redemption of mankind through Jesus Christ. The questions in this lesson encouraged the students to discuss mankind's fall into sin and reflect on their need for salvation. Repentance, faith and the role of the Holy Spirit in salvation were all touched upon. This discussion led the students to an understanding that salvation leads to a change in behavior which connected them back to lesson one that, as Christians, we reveal God to the world. The vocabulary words for this week—Redemption, Justification, Sanctification, Glorification—were designed to lead the students into an understanding that Salvation is a journey: justification is an event that

has happened, sanctification is the present now, and glorification is the hope of complete salvation.

The fourth lesson of the Pentecostal catechism focused on God's restoration of humanity. This week began with a review of all the previous vocabulary as it related it to the desired outcome for the previous lessons (e.g. understanding salvation helps me connect my life to God's redemption of mankind through Jesus Christ). The goal for this week's lesson was, "connecting my life to God's restoration of the world." This was accomplished through a series of questions and reflection on scripture. The aim was to help students understand that the future of God's restoration is about them. The event of Christ returning to earth and making everything new is a crucial part of being a Christian and it is something exciting that they are waiting for. At the end of this lesson the instructor administered the post-test assessment instrument. Due to the length of time it took for the students to complete the post-test, the lesson was shortened. In hindsight it would have been better to administer the post-test at a later date.

In designing a Pentecostal catechism, it has always been this researcher's intention to remain faithful to the history of the Church by maintaining the three distinctions of the Lord's Prayer, the Creeds, and the Decalogue. This first phase of the program has also been intentionally designed to reflect these three distinctions as Parrett and Kang highlight them: the way, the truth, and the life. This project has been meant to reflect the Life (The Lord's Prayer) in that each lesson was designed to show the students how their life connected with what God was doing or had done or will do. It was designed to reflect the Truth (The Creeds) as each lesson consisted of a time of explanation (through questions) of scripture and defining of key vocabulary words. It was

also designed to reflect the Way (Decalogue) by using a home assignment that would give the students a practical application to follow as well as way connect them to their parent's faith story. In this way the whole person (i.e. head, heart, hands) has been affected and enhances the learning. It engages the student cognitively with doctrine, practically with take home applications, and relationally through conversation.

It has also been the intention of this researcher to remain faithful to his Pentecostal heritage in designing this catechism. Here are some of the ways that this was accomplished. Firstly, the questions that were utilized in designing the explanation segment of the catechism were adapted from the booklet *Concerning the Faith* which was commissioned by the National Office of the PAOC in the 1950s to provide a teaching tool for churches. Secondly, each week during the pre-conversation and brainstorming of background knowledge the instructor was aware that the Holy Spirit may use this time to guide the conversation. He also used what the students were saying to gauge a starting point for the lesson. This meant that every catechism began differently depending on the location and audience involved in the catechesis. Finally, the instructor planned for and allowed tangents in the conversation as long as they did not stray away from the original goal of the lesson.<sup>6</sup> This gave room for the Spirit to speak directly to the students and gave the instructor opportunity to teach the students how to discern the voice of God.

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<sup>6</sup> This was one of the reasons that the lesson goals were so broad, it allowed for greater variance and contextualization in the teaching time.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **OUTCOMES AND CONCLUSION**

#### **Introduction**

In determining the value of this thesis-project it is important to be reminded of the objectives outlined in Chapter One.<sup>1</sup> The primary objective of this thesis-project was to ascertain whether catechesis can increase theological comprehension in Christian pre-teens. The secondary objective was to develop and test a template of a Pentecostal catechism in the BC/Yukon district of the PAOC. This chapter will examine the *D3: Disciples Digging Deeper* catechesis project in light of these objectives. The data collected from the assessment tools, for each participating group (CLCC and APA), will be evaluated in order to determine whether there was growth in theological comprehension as well whether this program would be viable for continued use in the future. After these outcomes have been presented some general conclusions will be given on the benefits and limitations of the program. Finally, some suggestions for future use and study will be given.

#### **Outcomes**

##### General Outcomes for APA

At APA, of the six pre-teens who initially showed up at the first meeting, five attended all four weeks while one only attended two. During the lessons all the students were engaged

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<sup>1</sup> See page 27.

and contributed answers. The personal responses on the post-test, which was administered after the final lesson, were quite positive. Here are some of the responses when the pre-teens were asked, “What do you like the most about the program of catechesis?”:

- “all of it”
- “I like that all the messages were clear and pretty easy to understand”
- “I really liked this class because it made me more closer to Jesus”
- “I liked that we had the duotangs that we could take home and study instead of just going home and forgetting everything.”
- “Learning new words”
- “I liked the discussions we had”

One parent from the APA group expressed thanks for the program because it was fostering spiritual conversation at home that was initiated by the pre-teen. This was not one of the objectives of the program though it is worth further study. It would be helpful to understand the influence of parental involvement on the faith development of pre-teens. This researcher would suggest that it would be positive and possibly even necessary. The program was a positive experience for all the pre-teens involved and helps the researcher to conclude that this could be a positive, repeatable experience for Pentecostal pre-teens across Canada.

As well, all but two of the pre-teens participated in the optional take home application, though only one fully participated. This suggests that the home participation part of the program should be mandatory. It was noted that when students did participate in the home assignment and time was given for discussion the next class, it was a positive discussion with insights that exhibited comprehension of the theme. For example, one assignment was for the pre-teens to watch the news with their parents and note the affects of sin. When this was discussed the next week, one pre-teen shared what she watched and

when asked was able to identify different ways in which the fall had affected these world events (e.g. “sin had made people want more power so they would kill others to get it”).

### General Outcomes for CLCC

At CLCC, of the six pre-teens who initially took part in the program, only four attended all four lessons.<sup>2</sup> The pre-teens from CLCC responded positively to the program. Here are some of the responses when they were asked, “What do you like the most about the program of catechesis?”:

- “How Mr. Andrew helped us understand clearly what he was talking about”
- “The in-depth teaching. Normally when you go to a youth group, you get a five-minute Gospel message, but this was more my speed. Loved it!”
- “I liked how we made connections to the Bible”
- “I loved learning more about God and getting to know other people’s faith, and discover my own”

All of the pre-teens for CLCC enjoyed the program and with the exception of the one male they all expressed interest in participating in a similar program in the future. The comment from the male pre-teen when asked whether he would do something like this again was, “I would not because I prefer my games and I don’t like meeting new people very much.” He was not opposed to the program but was more interested in his video games and social anxiety was partly to blame. This brings forth another area of adolescent development that needs to be explored further: how does addiction to technology (i.e. Facebook, video games, online role playing games) affecting the commitment level of pre-teens to a catechetical program.<sup>3</sup> Despite this seemingly

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<sup>2</sup> The data used for the CLCC case study was derived from the four participants who completed the pre-test, post-test and attended all four lessons.

<sup>3</sup> See “Young people, technology and change: understanding the system?” in *Metamorfosis. Revista del Centro Reina Sobre Adolescencia Y Juventud*. No2, Junio 2015. P 55-66.

negative response, the participant express that he found the program “very beneficial” and had no suggestions for changing it. It was this pre-teen’s mother who related to the researcher a month after the program ended that she was surprised at some of the insightful theological insights her son expressed when they were discussing the concept of salvation. She realized that it was not long after his four-week catechetical program and felt it was a direct benefit of the program. Though there is no way to show direct correlation, that fact that the mother was surprised suggests that the young man gained this new knowledge and insight from the program.

### Comprehension Outcomes

#### *Perceived knowledge compared to knowledge of definitions in pre-test*

One of the interesting findings of the two case studies was the disparity between perceived knowledge and actual knowledge. On the pre-test the students were given twelve vocabulary words and provided four possible answers: (1) I have never seen this word before, (2) I have seen this word, but I don’t know it, (3) I know something about this word, but cannot explain it well, and (4) I know this word well and I can use it in a sentence. This was to test their perceived knowledge of the topics that would be discuss in the following four weeks. The section following this on the pre-test was a matching activity where the pre-teens had to match the vocabulary words from the previous section to definitions that were provided. This was to test their actual theological knowledge of the terms provided. The results of these two activities were compared to ascertain the difference between perceived theological knowledge and actual theological knowledge.

Both groups were given twelve vocabulary words and asked to match the corresponding definition. For APA this added up to 60 responses and for CLCC this added up to 48 responses. The results were as follows:

- 23% “I know this word and I can use it in a sentence” (APA)
- 38% “I know something about this word, but cannot explain it well” (APA)
- 61% claimed to know something about the terms provided and could explain them to some degree. (APA)
- 39% “I know this word and I can use it in a sentence” (CLCC)
- 32% “I know something about this word, but cannot explain it well” (CLCC)
- 71% claimed to know something about the terms provided and could explain them to some degree. (CLCC)

One of the assertions of this project is that young Christians are becoming more biblically illiterate, yet these results suggest that this finding might not be true. These pre-teens claim to understand more than half of the theological vocabulary that are foundational to the *D3: Disciples Digging Deeper* program. Though it appears the biblically illiterate claim is not valid here, an examination of the matching exercise in the pre-test helps to give a better perspective. Sixty-one percent of the responses from the APA pre-teens claimed to know something about the terms provided yet only 27% of the responses correctly matched the vocabulary words with their corresponding definitions. At CLCC it was a similar story as 71% of the responses claimed to know something about the terms provided but only 47% of the responses correctly matched the vocabulary words with their corresponding definitions.

This suggests that there is a discrepancy between what pre-teens believe they know about God and what they actually do know about God. This is useful when discussing the need for a catechetical program for PAOC churches, especially if there is push back from pre-teens who believe they have a good grasp on their faith.

### *Comparison of Vocabulary Comprehension*

One way to determine if learning has occurred is to test the participants against the baseline that was established at the beginning of the program. The base line for theological knowledge was set using a matching exercise on the pre-test that was administered at the beginning of the first lesson. The APA pre-teens correctly matched 27% (16 of 60) of the theological terms with the definitions provided on the pre-test. On the post-test there was a significant jump in correct responses as 55% (33 of 60) of the responses correctly matched terms with definitions. This is a 106% increase in theological knowledge. This result corroborated with the results of the post-test vocabulary sentence exercise. For this exercise the students were given the same twelve terms and asked to put them in a sentence and 52% (31 of 60) of the sentences indicated that the students had some comprehension of the word, enough to use it in a sentence.

The CLCC pre-teens correctly matched 44% (22 of 48) of theological terms with the definitions provided on the pretest. On the post-test there was a significant jump in correct responses as 69% (33 of 48) of the responses correctly matched terms with definitions. This is a 55% increase in theological knowledge. This result was corroborated with the results of the post-test vocabulary sentence exercise. For this exercise the students were given the same twelve terms and asked to put them in sentence and 73% (35 of 48) of the sentences indicated that the students had some comprehension of the word, enough to use it in a sentence. Overall this means that from the pre-test to post-test there was a 74% increase in theological comprehension amongst the pre-teens in both groups. This finding is strong indicator that a catechetical discipleship program like

*D3: Disciples Digging Deeper* is beneficial for the Church and in particular for the PAOC.

#### *Comprehension in Scripture*

Section IV of the pre-test and post-test consisted of five scripture passages that illustrated one of the twelve theological vocabulary terms from earlier in the test. This question was designed to determine if the students were able to take their learning to a deeper level and discern the abstract idea of the theological terms in a context different from the one they were taught. The results of this section were not as positive as the researcher was hoping for, however it was not a total loss.

All five of the pre-teens from APA declined in their responses for this question, meaning that they answered more incorrect on the post-test than they did on the pre-test. All but one of the correct answers on the pre-test was answered incorrectly on the post-test. This indicates that the students did not understand their correct answers from the pre-test and were probably guessing. The group from CLCC faired better on this exercise as three out of the four pre-teens had more correct answers in the post-test than in the pre-test. Unlike the APA group, the pre-teens from CLCC only had one correct answer from the pre-test answered incorrectly on the post-test. This indicates that the students had a consistent understanding of the terms and were able to understand them outside of the learning context. One suggestion regarding this task of identifying theological concepts in scripture would be to practice this exercise during the lesson. This suggestion was derived from the fact that the group from CLCC brought their bibles each week and were actively looking up scripture which illustrated the theological terms that were being

discussed, while the group for APA were not. Having students active in Scripture is an important part of catechesis and theological growth.

## **Conclusions**

### **Limitations**

Though the pre-teens did not give any suggestions for improving *D3: Disciples Digging Deeper*, upon reflection there were three limitations of the project that need to be addressed. Time is the first limitation of the project in a number of ways. The length of the lessons for the APA group was too short so much of the lesson was rushed or not discussed. The four-week time frame was too short as well. It would have been more beneficial for the learning process to have each theme span over a two week time frame which would allow the students to reflect more about the theme, discuss the home application assignment more in depth, and allow the teacher to pause on points where there was a lack of understanding. Somewhat like when Augustine would pause in his sermons to address those that were not baptized and had less understanding than those that were.

The second limitation of this project was the limited contact between parents and the teacher. Though the verbal responses from the parents were positive, this project did not intentionally engage parents or strategically measure their opinion on the program. The researcher knew and connected with all the parents of the pre-teens in the CLCC group but for the APA group the youth pastor was the point of contact and the researcher only met a few parents at the end of the program. In hindsight connecting intentionally

with parents would have been beneficial in helping to develop a program that connects at church and at home, which is vital.

The third limitation of the project was the lack of active learning at the APA site. At the CLCC site the students were required to bring their bibles, but because of the more informal setting at APA this was not enforced. It was evident from the post-test that the CLCC pre-teens grew more in their ability to identify certain theological terms within scripture than their counterparts at APA. Though correlation cannot be determined, it is the opinion of this researcher that the time spent exploring the scriptures for theological terms with the CLCC group was instrumental for their increase in theological comprehension.

### Benefits

The benefits observed in the program *D3: Disciples Digging Deeper* line up with the objectives of this project that were expressed earlier in this paper: increase in theological comprehension and usability in the PAOC. The first benefit of the program was its usefulness in revealing misinformation that the pre-teens possessed regarding basic their theological knowledge. This is an important part of catechesis and was observed as students would express their understanding of theological terms during the brainstorming part of the lesson. This allowed the teacher to recognize where the misinformation was, as well it gave the pre-teens an opportunity to recognize their misunderstanding as the instructor moved into the teaching portion of the lesson.

This correction of misinformation was witnessed in the disparity between perceived knowledge and actual knowledge that was reported early in this paper. The pre-

teens from APA recorded that they knew something about 61% of the theological terms provided, yet their scores showed they only knew about 27%. The pre-teens from CLCC claimed that they knew something about 71% of the theological terms provided, yet their scores showed they only knew about 47%. The *D3: Disciples Digging Deeper* program was able to bridge this gap of the pre-teens in both APA and CLCC. The post-test of the pre-teens from APA showed that their comprehension of these words increased and they were able to use 52% of the theological terms in a sentence. For CLCC this increase was even more drastic as it improved to 73% which is greater than their perceived knowledge (71%) reported on the pre-test. This is a clear success of improvement in pre-teen theological comprehension.

The second benefit of the *D3: Disciples Digging Deeper* program was its positive and repeatable experience. When asked, “Would you do something like this again?” at both sites the most common response of the pre-teens was “yes, it was fun.” One student from CLCC wrote, “I looked forward to it every Friday it was a highlight of my week,” while another pre-teen from APA wrote, “Yes, because I learned a lot and enjoyed it as well.” One of the possible reasons behind this positive experience was the relaxed and conversational style of the program. It was intentionally designed to be taught through conversation, encouraging questions and doubts. The lessons which the students engaged the most in were when the teacher interacted with them on their level or area of interest first. For example, at CLCC before the second lesson began the pre-teens began discussing Star Wars. The instructor was able to engage the students in this topic and was able to connect the topic of Star Wars to the theme of that particular lesson (e.g. connecting Darth Vaders transformation to the dark side, with humanities struggle with

sin and the affects of “the Fall”). It was during this lesson that the students were the most attentive and engaged of the four weeks.

This program was held at two different locations at separate times and with different students. The constants were the teacher and the lesson plans. The results were very similar and both sites expressed interest in doing a program like this again. Of the nine students who fully participated in the program two indicated that they became less enthusiastic about studying the Bible, two indicated that they became more enthusiastic about studying the Bible, the other five remained the same. The two who became less enthusiastic was confusing since many of the positive comments suggested that all the students enjoyed studying the Bible. When the students were asked if they would do something like this again this was their replies:

- “Yes, because it was a very good study”
- “Yes, it was really fun getting together with everybody to talk about Jesus”
- “Yes, because it was fun and I understand the Bible better”
- “Yes, because I love learning, and Andrew is an AWESOME teacher”

This demonstrates that *D3: Disciples Digging Deeper* is the type of program is something pre-teens would be interested in.

Two of students indicated that they grew more confident in their relationship with Jesus while the others remained the same. Five of the students indicated an increase in how confident they feel in their understanding of salvation from “a little confident” to “quite confident.” Two of the students indicated that they became more comfortable sharing their faith, though one student did indicate that she became less comfortable sharing her faith. It must be noted that when answering these personal response questions on the post-test the students were not provided their previous answers to determine if they felt they increased or decreased. This means it is possible that they may have increased or

decreased because of the way they felt that day. In spite of this possibility it is clear from all the data that it would be beneficial to develop this program fully for the pre-teens in the PAOC.

### **Recommended Changes**

To develop *D3: Disciples Digging Deeper* into a full catechism for the PAOC some of the lessons learned in this project will need to be applied. First the program session (e.g. Spring and Fall) need to be lengthened from four weeks to eight weeks and be at least sixty minutes in length in order to effectively teach the theological themes. Second, at the end of the eight-week period the student should incorporate what they have learned into a testimony that they would share at an appropriate church event (e.g. after the last session the student will give their testimony before their baptism). Third, to ensure a higher level of commitment, this program should not be used as a regular small group or Sunday School event; keep it as an augmentation to the youth ministry and be more intentional about connecting families to the process. This would ensure that students want to be there and will bring the appropriate materials (i.e. Bible) and parents will be more aware of what is going on. Fourth, make the home application assignments mandatory and more practical in application. The pre-teens did not generally follow through with the assignments, most likely because they were optional. Fifth and final, it would be better if the teacher has a prior relationship with the pre-teens to help facilitate a positive environment that encourages open discussion.

## Next Steps

In order to introduce catechesis as a viable method of youth discipleship into the PAOC more work needs to be done. The first step in the future of *D3: Disciples Digging Deeper* is to test the entire catechism more fully. There is a need for a long term study (3-4 years) to discover whether this catechism has lasting effect on the theological comprehension of pre-teens as they get older. The plan to accomplish this step is to approach the Middle School<sup>4</sup> pastor of CLCC to discuss the possibility of implementing *D3: Disciples Digging Deeper* in her middle school program. It is the hope of this researcher to use this information to: (1) develop a catechism for PAOC, (2) develop a college level youth ministry course at Summit Pacific College focusing on the theological discipleship of young people, and (3) write a youth ministry book on the theological discipleship of young people using catechism.

Another step in the future of *D3: Disciples Digging Deeper* is to approach the district and national leaders of the PAOC to see what kind of interest and support would be available. In order to accomplish this support, the thesis-project needs to be summarized into a brochure and seminar that can be taught at annual conferences (both national and local). The purpose is to educate pastors and lay leaders in the PAOC that catechism is not merely a Roman Catholic tool of indoctrination; that it can be a significant part of training our young people in the Faith. To do this effectively more research needs to be done regarding the history of catechism, especially within the PAOC, the purpose of catechism in the Church and how it fits within the new PAOC mandate put forth by the head office. There is no doubt that this type of program can

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<sup>4</sup> Middle School consists of grades six to eight in the school district in Abbotsford, British Columbia, Canada.

effectively increase theological comprehension in Pentecostal pre-teens the question now is, “Does the PAOC want to use it in discipling the next generation for Jesus?”

## APPENDIX A

### NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY

This questionnaire is part of my Doctor of Ministry project. It is designed to obtain valuable *feedback from the pastors of our district (BC/Yukon, PAOC) regarding the theological comprehension of pre-teens (grade 6-7) in our district*. This feedback is meant to aid me in my Doctoral studies on pre-teens in *determining whether there is a need in our district for more focus on theological training*. Do not place your name on this survey. All of the information gathered is anonymous and will be presented in summary form with the responses from other participants. Thank you for taking the time to share your thoughts with me.

### Section 1 - Demographic Data

Circle one answer for each question: (e.g., for Q1, only circle a, b, c, d, or e)

1. What is the average weekly attendance (size) of your church?
  - a. 0-99
  - b. 100-249
  - c. 250-499
  - d. 500-999
  - e. 1000+
  
2. What is your pastoral role (if you have more than one portfolio, please choose the one that represents the largest part of your job description)?
  - a. Lead
  - b. Associate
  - c. Young Adult
  - d. Youth
  - e. Children
  - f. Worship
  - g. Other: \_\_\_\_\_
  
3. You are:
  - a. Male
  - b. Female

4. How often do you have contact with preteens in your church?
  - a. more than once a week
  - b. once a week
  - c. twice a month
  - d. once a month
  - e. less than once a month
5. How many years of pastoral experience do you have?
  - a. 0-5 years
  - b. 6-10 years
  - c. 11-20 years
  - d. 21-30 years
  - e. 30+ years
6. How long have you been at your current church?
  - a. Between churches
  - b. Less than 1 year
  - c. 1-4 years
  - d. 5-9 years
  - e. 10+ years
7. In what age group are you?
  - a. below 25
  - b. 25-29
  - c. 30-39
  - d. 40-49
  - e. 50+

## Section 2 - Pre-Teens and Theology

8. For the pre-teens in your church, how would you **rate** their **ability to successfully explain the following theological concepts** to you:

RESPONSE KEY FOR ANSWERS BELOW <i>(please circle appropriate number)</i>				
not at all	barely successful	moderately successful	quite successful	extremely successful
1	2	3	4	5

a. The doctrine of sin?	1	2	3	4	5
b. Spirit Baptism?	1	2	3	4	5
c. The Church?	1	2	3	4	5
d. The Trinity?	1	2	3	4	5
e. Salvation?	1	2	3	4	5
f. Eschatology?	1	2	3	4	5
g. The Sacraments?	1	2	3	4	5
h. Biblical Authority?	1	2	3	4	5

9. To what extent **should** pre-teens in your church **be able to understand the following theological concepts?**

Response Key for Answers Below (circle appropriate number)

**Recall** – They should be able to recall memorized facts about the concept.

**Explain** – They should be able to explain the concept in their own words

**Apply** – They should be able to demonstrate how the concept affects their life (e.g., A student should be able to articulate that taking part in communion affects their life because it represents the forgiveness of their sin and that they should forgive others)

**Analyze** – They should be able to divide the concept into parts and determine how the parts connect to one another or to an overall theological structure (e.g., the concept of salvation can be divided into justification, sanctification, and glorification)

**Synthesize** – They should be able to combine the concept with other theological concepts to create a coherent set of beliefs (e.g., combining the concepts of the trinity and salvation to gain a new understanding of the roles of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in salvation)

<b>The doctrine of sin?</b>	1	Recall	2	Explain	3	Apply	4 Analyze	5 Synthesize
<b>Spirit Baptism?</b>	1	Recall	2	Explain	3	Apply	4 Analyze	5 Synthesize
<b>The Church?</b>	1	Recall	2	Explain	3	Apply	4 Analyze	5 Synthesize
<b>The Trinity?</b>	1	Recall	2	Explain	3	Apply	4 Analyze	5 Synthesize
<b>Salvation?</b>	1	Recall	2	Explain	3	Apply	4 Analyze	5 Synthesize
<b>Eschatology?</b>	1	Recall	2	Explain	3	Apply	4 Analyze	5 Synthesize
<b>The Sacraments?</b>	1	Recall	2	Explain	3	Apply	4 Analyze	5 Synthesize
<b>Biblical Authority?</b>	1	Recall	2	Explain	3	Apply	4 Analyze	5 Synthesize

10. To what extent do the pre-teens in your church **need more theological instruction** than they currently receive (e.g., from youth night or small group)?  
(circle appropriate number)

- 1 no need at all
- 2 minimal
- 3 moderate
- 4 much
- 5 very much

11. Catechism can be defined as “*a summary of the principles of Christian religion in the form of questions and answers used for the instruction of Christians.*”

According to this definition, I believe that Catechism could be useful in the theological instruction of Christian pre-teens. (circle appropriate number)

- 1 strongly disagree
- 2 disagree
- 3 neutral
- 4 agree
- 5 strongly agree

### Section 3 – Questions on Catechism

Please answer the following: (circle appropriate letter)

12. I experienced some form of formal catechism in my childhood years (7-16):

- a. yes (continue to question 13)
- b. no (skip questions 13,14,15 and continue at Section 4, open-ended questions)

13. (If yes to Q12) The bulk of that training took place ...

- a. (... in my) Family
- b. (... at the) Church
- c. (... at a) Christian school
- d. other: \_\_\_\_\_

14. Was your experience with catechism positive or negative?

- a. positive
- b. negative

15. Why was your experience positive or negative? *(please elaborate below)*

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### Section 4 – Open Ended Questions

Please elaborate on your answers to the following questions, using the space below.

16. The dictionary definition for Catechism was used in Question 11 of Section 2 above. Do you think this definition for Catechism captures the full meaning for you? If not, how would you define Catechism?

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17. If there was a PAOC catechism for youth ministry **how many weeks** would you suggest it should run? (please elaborate on your choice)

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18. If you used a PAOC catechism for youth ministry **who** would be teaching it in your church setting?

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19. What topics would you suggest to be mandatory for a PAOC catechism in youth ministry?

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20. If the PAOC catechism for youth ministry was available online or through a smartphone/tablet app would you use it?

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21. What specific concern/suggestions would you have about catechism being used in youth ministry?

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Thank you for taking the time to fill out this survey. Feel free to contact me ([aejvans@summitpacific.ca](mailto:aejvans@summitpacific.ca)) if you are interested in the results of this survey.

Finally, would you be interested in taking part of a future test project to determine whether Catechism can be effective in increasing theological comprehension in pre-teens:

☐ Yes ☐ No.

Sincerely,

Andrew Evans

**APPENDIX B**  
**PRE-TEST**

**I. Biographical Information**

1. **Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ (to be replaced with a randomized ID number)
2. **Age:** \_\_\_\_\_
3. **Grade:** \_\_\_\_\_

Please circle one answer for each of the following questions:

4. **Gender:**
  - a. MALE
  - b. FEMALE
5. **Do you consider yourself a Christian?**
  - a. YES -- If yes, at what age did you decide? \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. NO
6. **Is your mother a Christian?**
  - a. YES
  - b. NO
  - c. I DON'T KNOW
7. **Does your mother attend Sunday church on a regular basis?**
  - a. YES
  - b. NO
8. **Is your father a Christian?**
  - a. YES
  - b. NO
  - c. I DON'T KNOW
9. **Does your father attend Sunday church on a regular basis?**
  - a. YES
  - b. NO
10. **Does either parent teach you about the Bible, or being a Christian, at home?**
  - a. YES
  - b. NO
  - c. I DON'T KNOW

**11. Does anyone else in your family (brother/sister, grandparents, uncle/aunt) teach you about the Bible, or being a Christian, at home?**

- a. YES
- b. NO
- c. I DON'T KNOW

**12. What type of school do you go to?**

- a. Public
- b. Catholic
- c. Private
- d. Homeschool

**13. Number of years attending Sunday church on a regular basis (since 8 yrs old):**

- a. 0
- b. 1
- c. 2
- d. 3
- e. 4
- f. 5

**14. How often did you attend Sunday church over the past 12 months?**

- a. less than once a month
- b. once a month
- c. twice a month
- d. once a week
- e. more than once a week

**15. How often did you attend your youth group over the past 12 months?**

- a. less than once a month
- b. once a month
- c. twice a month
- d. once a week
- e. more than once a week

**16. How would you rate yourself in terms of Bible knowledge and understanding?**

- a. not much
- b. just a beginner
- c. a little more than a beginner
- d. much more than a beginner
- e. very much more than a beginner

## II. Vocab Words

Check the answer with a √ that best describes your understanding of each word (Pre-Test only)

<b>Vocabulary Word</b>	<b>1</b> I have never seen this word before	<b>2</b> I have seen this word, but I don't know it	<b>3</b> I know something about this word, but cannot explain it well	<b>4</b> I know this word well and I can use it in a sentence.
1-Creation				
2-The Fall				
3-Glorification				
4-Gospel				
5-Incarnation				
6-Justification				
7-Redemption				
8-Restoration				
9-revelation				
10-Salvation				
11-Sanctification				
12-Sin				

### III. Vocab Matching

Match each word with the correct definition:

- |                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| A. Creation       | ___ Missing the mark                        |
| B. The Fall       | ___ The removal the presence of sin         |
| C. Glorification  | ___ The Good News                           |
| D. Gospel         | ___ The removal of the penalty of sin       |
| E. Incarnation    | ___ Fixing a broken relationship            |
| F. Justification  | ___ The removal of the power of sin         |
| G. Redemption     | ___ When God made the world                 |
| H. Restoration    | ___ Bought Back                             |
| I. Revelation     | ___ When sin entered the world through Adam |
| J. Salvation      | ___ God coming to earth as a human (Jesus)  |
| K. Sanctification | ___ Uncovering or unveiling                 |
| L. Sin            | ___ God's deliverance of humanity           |

#### IV. Scenarios

Identify which theological term is found in each biblical passage:

1. "Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you" (1 Corinthians 15:1-2)
  - a. Justification
  - b. Sanctification
  - c. Glorification
  - d. Incarnation
2. "For by grace you have been saved through faith." (Ephesians 2:8)
  - a. Justification
  - b. Sanctification
  - c. Sin
  - d. The Fall
3. "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's Favor." (Luke 4:18-19)
  - a. Incarnation
  - b. Restoration
  - c. The Gospel
  - d. Sin
4. "For his (God's) invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made" (Romans 2:3)
  - a. Revelation
  - b. Sin
  - c. Restoration
  - d. Salvation
5. "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth." (John 1:14)
  - a. Glorification
  - b. Redemption
  - c. Incarnation
  - d. Justification

## V. Personal Opinion on Selected Topics

Circle one answer for each question: (e.g., for Q1, only circle a, b, c, d, or e)

1. Rate how confident you feel in *your relationship with Jesus*.
  - a. Not at all confident
  - b. A little confident
  - c. Quite confident
  - d. Very confident
  - e. Totally confident
  
2. Rate how confident you feel in *your understanding of salvation*.
  - a. Not at all confident
  - b. A little confident
  - c. Quite confident
  - d. Very confident
  - e. Totally confident
  
3. Rate how comfortable you feel *about sharing your faith*.
  - a. Not at all comfortable
  - b. A little comfortable
  - c. Quite comfortable
  - d. Very comfortable
  - e. Totally comfortable
  
4. Rate how enthusiastic you feel *about studying the Bible*.
  - a. Not at all enthusiastic
  - b. A little enthusiastic
  - c. Quite enthusiastic
  - d. Very enthusiastic
  - e. Totally enthusiastic

**APPENDIX C**  
**POST-TEST**

**I. Biographical Information**

**Number:**

**II. Vocab Sentences**

Use each following word in a sentence to show your understanding. If you are unsure then cross out the word and skip to the next word.

**1-Creation**

Sentence:

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**2-The Fall**

Sentence:

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**3-Glorification**

Sentence:

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**4-Gospel**

Sentence:

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---

**5-Incarnation**

Sentence:

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**6-Justification**

Sentence:

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**7-Redemption**

Sentence:

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**8-Resotration**

Sentence:

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**9-Revelation**

Sentence:

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**10-Salavation**

Sentence:

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**11-Sanctificaiton**

Sentence:

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---

## 12-Sin

Sentence:

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### III. Vocab Matching

Match each word with the correct definition:

- |                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| A. Creation       | ___ Missing the mark                        |
| B. The Fall       | ___ The removal the presence of sin         |
| C. Glorification  | ___ The Good News                           |
| D. Gospel         | ___ The removal of the penalty of sin       |
| E. Incarnation    | ___ Fixing a broken relationship            |
| F. Justification  | ___ The removal of the power of sin         |
| G. Redemption     | ___ When God made the world                 |
| H. Restoration    | ___ Bought Back                             |
| I. Revelation     | ___ When sin entered the world through Adam |
| J. Salvation      | ___ God coming to earth as a human (Jesus)  |
| K. Sanctification | ___ Uncovering or unveiling                 |
| L. Sin            | ___ God's deliverance of humanity           |

#### **IV. Scenarios**

Identify which theological term is found in each biblical passage:

1. “Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you” (1 Corinthians 15:1-2)
  - a. Justification
  - b. Sanctification
  - c. Glorification
  - d. Incarnation
2. “For by grace you have been saved through faith.” (Ephesians 2:8)
  - a. Justification
  - b. Sanctification
  - c. Sin
  - d. The Fall
3. “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s Favor.” (Luke 4:18-19)
  - a. Incarnation
  - b. Restoration
  - c. The Gospel
  - d. Sin
4. “For his (God’s) invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made” (Romans 2:3)
  - a. Revelation
  - b. Sin
  - c. Restoration
  - d. Salvation
5. “And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.” (John 1:14)
  - a. Glorification
  - b. Redemption
  - c. Incarnation
  - d. Justification

## **V. Personal Opinion on Selected Topics**

Now that you have completed the four week program of catechesis, please answer the following questions. Circle one answer for each question: (e.g., for Q1, only circle a, b, c, d, or e):

1. Rate how confident you feel in *your relationship with Jesus*.
  - a. Not at all confident
  - b. A little confident
  - c. Quite confident
  - d. Very confident
  - e. Totally confident
  
2. Rate how confident you feel in *your understanding of salvation*.
  - a. Not at all confident
  - b. A little confident
  - c. Quite confident
  - d. Very confident
  - e. Totally confident
  
3. Rate how comfortable you feel *about sharing your faith*.
  - a. Not at all comfortable
  - b. A little comfortable
  - c. Quite comfortable
  - d. Very comfortable
  - e. Totally comfortable
  
4. Rate how enthusiastic you feel *about studying the Bible*.
  - a. Not at all *enthusiastic*
  - b. A little enthusiastic
  - c. Quite enthusiastic
  - d. Very enthusiastic
  - e. Totally enthusiastic
  
5. Did you complete all four weeks?
  - a. YES
  - b. NO --- how many weeks did you attend? \_\_\_\_ (number of weeks attended: 0, 1, 2, 3)

6. Did you participate fully in the weekly home assignments?
- a. YES
  - b. NO --- how many weekly home assignments did you complete? \_\_\_\_ (number completed)

7. Rate *how beneficial you feel the program was?*

- a. Not at all *beneficial* (skip Q8, and go to Q9)
- b. A little beneficial
- c. Quite beneficial
- d. Very beneficial
- e. Totally beneficial

8. What did you *like the most about the program* of catechesis? (please elaborate below:)

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9. If you could change one thing about the program to make it better, what would that be?

- a. Nothing to change
- b. Change:

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10. Would you do something like this again?

- a. YES --- please elaborate why:

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- b. NO --- please elaborate why:

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## APPENDIX D

### D3: DISCIPLES DIGGING DEEPER CURRICULUM

#### D3 – Catechesis Lesson Plan Week #1

Grade Level: 6-8

Subject Area: Theology

Lesson Title: Creation

##### ***Phase One: Engage the Learner***

1. Introduce the study
  - Explain the reason for the study and my doctoral project
  - Pre-Test (not graded, but need honest answers for the study to be effective)
  - Handout Duo-tangs
2. Introduce the main learning goal: “I am able to connect my life to God’s **grand biblical narrative**”
  - Briefly explain Creation, The Fall, Redemption, Restoration
3. Lesson Goal #1: “I am able to connect my life to God’s **creation** of the world”

##### ***Phase Two: Explore the Concept***

- Background Knowledge of creation
  - Write a mind map on the white board for Creation
  - Look for ideas they give that can help to lead into the teaching time, as well as misinformation that needs to be corrected

##### ***Phase Three: Explain the concept and define terms***

Lesson Goal #1: “I am able to connect my life to God’s **creation** of the world”

1. What is Creation?
  - a. **Creation** “Everything that exists other than God”
2. Did God Create all things?
  - a. All things were created by the Triune God (Eph 3:9)
3. What is the Triune God?
  - a. **Trinity** “One divine nature is a unity of 3 persons and God is revealed as 3 distinct persons”
4. Who created humans?
  - a. Genesis 1:26,27
5. What was the nature of the creation of humans?
  - a. Male and female; After God’s own image
6. What does it mean that humans were created in God’s image?
  - a. Not physical because God is spirit (John 4:24)

- b. Moral image (ability to choose good and evil, to rule, to reason)
  - c. Adam and Even bore the moral image of God (they were perfect) and had perfect relationship with God
  - d. Adam and Eve reflected God or, like all creation, revealed God
- 7. What does it mean to reveal God?
  - a. Revelation “to uncover or unveil”
  - b. Explain General Revelation (Creation) and Special (Scripture)
- 8. How does Creation reveal God?
  - a. (Romans 1:18-20)
- 9. How do we uncover or unveil God?
  - a. Think of ways that we reflect our parents
  - b. Through our lifestyle (John 13:35)
- 10. How does God’s creation of the world connect with our lives?
  - a. We are made in God’s image and reveal God to the world
  - b. Imagine if you were the only person who knew God in your school, what kind of picture of God would they have?

***Phase Four: Elaborate the Concept***

- Vocab Practice sheets
  - Creation
  - Trinity
  - Revelation

***Phase Five: Explain Home Application***

- Explain Home App
  - Optional
  - These are meant to take place during natural daily rituals (i.e. dinner time, bed time, driving to activities)
  - Sheet with apps for home, observations, questions that you might have during the week
  - **Week #1:** Ask your parents “How did you become a Christian?” and “Why did you become a Christian?”

## **D3 – Catechesis Lesson Plan Week #2**

Grade Level: 6-8

Subject Area: Theology

Lesson Title: The Fall

***Phase One: Engage the Learner***

1. Review last week:

- Lesson Goal: “I am able to connect my life to God’s **creation** of the world”
  - Creation – who created us?
  - Trinity – what does this mean?
  - Revelation – How do we reveal God to the world?
  - Did anyone ask their parents the questions? Do you want to share how it went?
2. Review the main learning goal: “I am able to connect my life to God’s **grand biblical narrative**”
  3. Lesson Goal #2: “I am able to connect my life to **the fall** of man into sin”
    - Two aspects: 1) how the fall affects me personally, and 2) how the fall affects the world around me.

### ***Phase Two: Explore the Concept***

- Background Knowledge of the fall
  - Write a mind map on the white board for the Fall
  - Look for ideas they give that can help to lead into the teaching time, as well as misinformation that needs to be corrected

### ***Phase Three: Explain the concept and define terms***

Lesson Goal #2: “I am able to connect my life to **the fall** of man into sin:

1. What caused the fall of Adam and Eve?
  - a. Have them guess first then read
  - b. Gen. 2:15-17; 3:1-7
  - c. Unbelief and disobedience to God’s word
  - d. Adam and Eve believed the serpent’s words instead of God’s
2. What did the serpent’s words imply?
  - a. That God was deceitful in holding back a blessing and that His words were not true
3. What effect did their sin have on Adam and Eve?
  - a. Their natures were now fallen and tainted by this act of sin. They lost their original righteousness, thus coming under the sentence of death—moral, spiritual, and physical
  - b. Gen 2:17
4. What does it mean to die morally, spiritually, and physically
  - a. Separation from God
  - b. No longer righteous
  - c. No longer connect to God’s Spirit
  - d. No longer able to be in God’s presence

5. What was the effect of the fall upon the whole human race
  - a. Sin was transmitted to the whole human race.
  - b. Common church teaching has been that the corruption of human nature and its penalty of death were transmitted to the whole race as a result of the Fall of Adam and Eve
  - c. Gen 5:1-3; Psa 51:5
  - d. Following the Fall we have: murder, the flood, the tower of Babel, Men everywhere defying God by war and hatred, followed by death and sorrow
  - e. Isa 53:6; Rom 1:18-3:20; 3:23
6. What was the effect of this act upon each individual?
  - a. The Fallen nature of Adam was transmitted to every human being
  - b. Rom 5:12-21
  - c. By the offense of one man (Adam) death has come upon all mankind.
  - d. This is original sin (Rom 6:23)
7. Where does this leave humans?
  - a. Separated from God
  - b. Condemned to death: physical, spiritual, moral.
8. Where does this leave us?
  - a. In need of someone to save us from this death

#### ***Phase Four: Elaborate the Concept***

- Vocab Practice sheets
  - The fall
    - When Adam and Eve disobeyed God's Word and sin entered the world.
    - This separated us from God
  - Sin
    - The breaking of God's Word and Law.
    - It is any word, thought, or action which comes between us and God
    - An act of disobedience (deliberate wrong doing) to the known will of God (1 John 3:4)
    - It is rebellion against God
    - Missing the mark or deviating from the goal (mostly moral); taking the wrong road. This is the most common in the OT and NT
  - Salvation
    - God's deliverance of humanity from the power and effects of sin and the Fall
    - So that creation in general and humans in particular can enjoy the fullness of life that God intended

### ***Phase Five: Explain Home Application***

- Explain Home App
  - Optional
  - These are meant to take place during natural daily rituals (i.e. dinner time, bed time, driving to activities)
  - Sheet with apps for home, observations, questions that you might have during the week
  - **Week #2:** Watch two news events with your parents or read about two news events in the newspaper or online with your parents and try to describe the effects of the fall you observe.

## **D3 – Catechesis Lesson Plan Week #3**

Grade Level: 6-8

Subject Area: Theology

Lesson Title: Redemption

### ***Phase One: Engage the Learner***

1. Summary of the previous Week
  - Lesson Goal: “I am able to connect my life to **the fall** of man into sin”
  - Two aspects: 1) how the fall affects me personally, and 2) how the fall affects the world around me.
2. Review the main learning goal: “I am able to connect my life to God’s **grand biblical narrative**”
3. Lesson Goal #3: “I am able to connect my life to God’s **redemption** of man through Jesus Christ”

### ***Phase Two: Explore the Concept***

- Background Knowledge of Redemption
  - Write a mind map on the white board for Redemption
  - Look for ideas they give that can help to lead into the teaching time, as well as misinformation that needs to be corrected

### ***Phase Three: Explain the concept and define terms***

1. Lesson Goal #3: “I am able to connect my life to God’s **redemption** of man through Jesus Christ”
2. Redemption: Buying back (e.g. Pawn shop item that is bought back)

3. Man is spiritually dead
  - Eph 2:1
4. Man needs to repent
  - Luke 13:3
  - Repentance is turning from sin to God (it is a 180 degree turn)
5. Repentance is brought about by the Holy Spirit
  - John 16:8
6. Repentance takes faith in Jesus
  - This is faith - Heb 11:1
  - Faith is about heart and mind, it is being just knowing and believing about God
  - Following Jesus is usually described with an action (i.e. "follow me")
  - There is a proclamation with our mouth (Rom 10:9)
  - There is a change in behavior (James 2:26)
7. This is accomplished through the cross
  - Rom 5:6-8; 18-19
  - This is Jesus' work of redemption
  - 2 Cor 5:21 – he became sin for us
  - Rom 6:5-7
8. We need to understand that redemption is a process we call salvation
9. It is made up of three ideas: justification (past), Sanctification (present), Glorification (future)
10. What does justification mean?
  - a. Ephesians 2:8
  - b. Being removed from the penalty of sin
11. What does Justification do for us?
  - c. It removes our death sentence
  - d. It removes our guilt of sin. We are declared morally perfect again.
  - e. Our righteousness has been returned, thus we can connect to God again
12. What does sanctification mean?
  - f. 2 Corinthians 4:16
  - g. Rom 6:14
  - h. Being removed from the power of sin, by being set apart
13. If you are justified, why do you need to be sanctified?
  - i. Because there is still the power of sin in your life which wants to control you.
  - j. Sanctification is a result of justification (we are no longer guilty so let's learn to act that way)
14. What does sanctification look like?
  - k. Philippians 2:12

- l. This means it is learning what it means to follow Jesus
- m. What are some things that have taken you time to learn?
15. What does glorification mean?
  - n. 1 Peter 1:5
  - o. Being removed from the presence of sin
  - p. This is the end product (eternity with God)

#### ***Phase Four: Elaborate the Concept***

- Vocab Practice sheets
- Justification: Removed from the penalty of sin (happened – past)
- Sanctification: Removed from the power of sin (happening – present)
- Glorification: Removed from the presence of sin (will happen – future)
- Redemption: Bought back

#### ***Phase Five: Explain Home Application***

- Explain Home App
  - Optional
  - These are meant to take place during natural daily rituals (i.e. dinner time, bed time, driving to activities)
  - **Week #3:** Ask your parents “How does **being saved** change the way you live?” and throughout the week try to look for signs of God’s redemption around you

### **D3 – Catechesis Lesson Plan Week #4**

Grade Level: 6-8

Subject Area: Theology

Lesson Title: Restoration

#### ***Phase One: Engage the Learner***

1. Summary of the previous week
  - Review Lesson goal #3: “I am able to connect my life to God’s **redemption** of man through Jesus Christ”
2. Review the main learning goal: “I am able to connect my life to God’s **grand biblical narrative**”
3. Review the vocab:
  - Creation
  - Trinity

- Revelation
  - The Fall
  - Sin
  - Salvation
  - Redemption
  - Justification
  - Sanctification
  - Glorification
4. Lesson Goal #4: “I am able to connect my life to God’s future hope of **restoration** of the world”

### ***Phase Two: Explore the Concept***

- Background Knowledge of the restoration of humanity
  - Write a mind map on the white board for Restoration
  - Look for ideas they give that can help to lead into the teaching time, as well as misinformation that needs to be corrected

### ***Phase Three: Explain the concept and define terms***

1. Lesson Goal #4: “I am able to connect my life to God’s future hope of **restoration** of the world”
2. This is what we call eschatology (write on the white board) – theology of end times
3. Questions:
  1. What do we mean by heaven?
    - a. We mean that heaven is a place and not merely a state or condition.
    - b. Jn 14:2 – I go to prepare a place
    - c. Jn 17:24; 2 Cor 5:1-10; Rev 5:6
  2. What will Heaven be like?
    - a. Perfect - Rev 21:27; 22:3
    - b. Beautiful – 1 Cor. 2:9; Rom 8:20-22
    - c. Know God fully – 1 Cor 13:12; Psa 17:15; 1 John 3:2
    - d. Eternal – Jn 3:16; 5:24; Psa 90:2; Heb 1:12; Rev 1:8
    - e. New– Rev 21:1-5
  3. Why do I need to know this about heaven?
    - a. This is the future for all those who believe in Jesus
    - b. Eternity with God
    - c. This is the Gospel = the good news
- Read Revelation from the Story Book Bible

***Phase Four: Elaborate the Concept***

- Vocab Practice sheets
- Restoration
- Gospel

***Phase Five: Evaluate Student's understanding of the Concept***

- Week #4: Post-Test

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